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N.S.B.

The Black Cat

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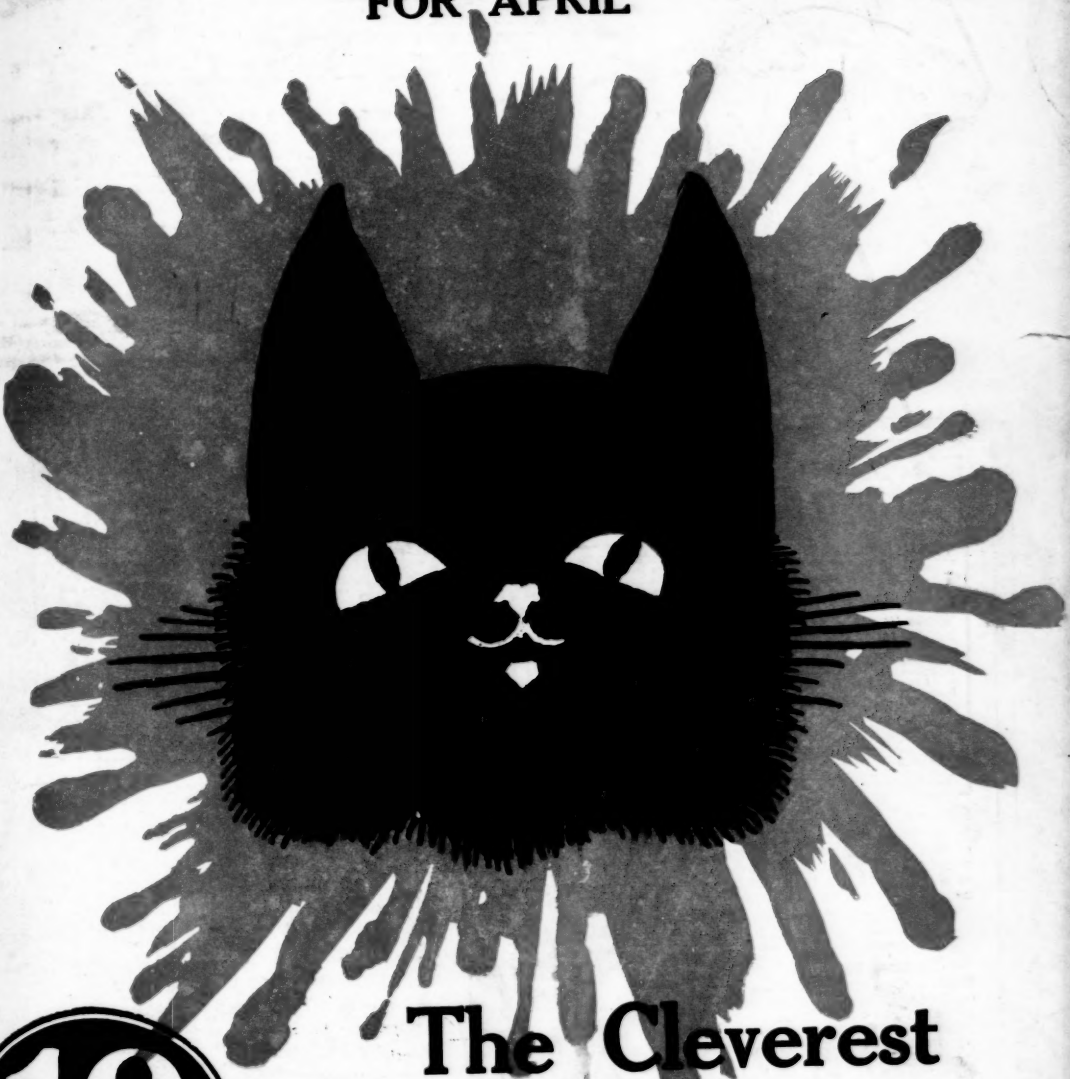

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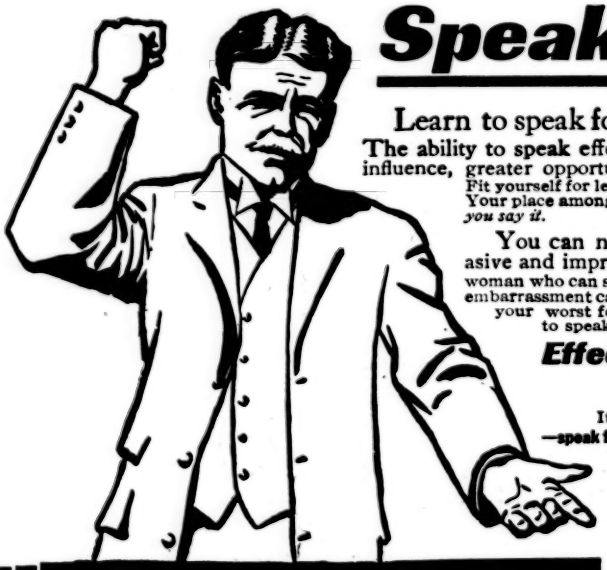

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The Black Cat

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The Black Cat

Law Versus Justice

BY MARVIN LESLIE

A technicality of the law is used, this time, to render justice.

"MY story is a short one," said the young man, "and I will make it as brief as possible. My father, John Emery, lived in the Province of New Brunswick within a quarter of a mile of the boundary line between that Province and the State of Maine. He was of an inventive turn of mind, and for years he and an American, John Ellison, had worked on a log-hauler which could be used in the lumber regions of Canada and Northern Maine. Finally they evolved a machine that worked successfully, but father died suddenly just at that time, and shortly afterward we ascertained that the patent had been issued in the name of Ellison alone, and not in their joint names, as had been understood between them. Ellison deceived father in some way, or probably tampered with the application papers. At any rate, he got the full benefit of the work, and has just sold the patent rights for one hundred thousand dollars. We are entitled to a half interest, but he says that he did the bulk of the work and that father had just been hired by him to help on some of the insignificant details, and it is very hard for us to prove the contrary, as father is dead, and he never gave us much information about it at any time beyond his repeated statements that the machine was a complete success and that they were equal partners in the deal."

"What have you done in the matter?" inquired Logan.

"I came up here to Montreal for the purpose of employing counsel and starting suit against Ellison. One of the leading lawyers here tells me that there is a chance to attack the patent in the United States Courts if I can raise $5000 for preliminary expenses, but I am not altogether ignorant of conditions in that country, and it looks like a losing game from the start. Still, I think I would have tried to raise the money and take my chances if a friend here hadn't advised me to come to you first. He said that you were different from the ordinary lawyer, that you make a specialty of handling matters that others pronounce hopeless, and do it in an entirely original way, succeeding where others fail."

"Some enthusiastic friend has no doubt been over-rating my poor ability," replied Logan. "But if there is

any way in which I can assist you I should be glad to do so, as you have justice on your side, and the case presents some interesting features."

"I should be glad if you would try it," declared Emery.

"You have always lived in New Brunswick, I presume?" queried Logan.

"Yes. Our people always boasted of Loyalist blood, although it was about the only good it did them."

"And would you mind if you were shut out from ever setting foot in the United States?"

"Not at all," replied Emery. "I have no relatives or interests there."

"Then," continued Logan, "you would be perfectly satisfied, if you can get your rights in this matter, to be forever precluded from going into the 'great republic to the south of us'?"

"Nothing would suit me better," replied Emery.

"I presume there are points," suggested Logan, "where the New Brunswick and Maine settlements are in close touch."

"There are hundreds of such places," explained Emery. "There is one spot where the highway runs for miles right on the line, so you can drive a team with one horse in Canada and the other in the United States. Then there are the 'line stores,' which are peculiar to the Maine and New Brunswick boundary."

"What are they like?"

"In both Maine and New Brunswick there is a prohibitory law, and the liquor dealers put up stores on the line so that the international boundary runs right through the bar which is in the center of the building. Then they put the liquors on a movable platform under the bar. When a Canadian customer comes in, the bartender stands on the American side and sells him his 'booze'; when a Maine man comes in, the bartender goes around the end of the bar into Canada and sells from that side. Then if a New Brunswick officer makes a raid on him, he simply moves his stock of liquors a few feet west, where it is in the United States and safe from seizure. When an American officer comes on the same errand, the proprietor and his stock move into Canada, and he is equally safe from arrest."

"It is certainly an interesting situation," declared Logan, "and I would like to try out a certain scheme in connection with it. For instance, would it be possible by any means to get Ellison into one of these stores you speak of?"

"Sure," replied Emery; "he runs one himself—probably the biggest one from the St. Croix to Grand Falls, where the boundary line strikes the St. John River."

"Does he live there, too?"

"Yes. The house, store and everything, are under the one roof."

"And does he by any chance keep his money there?" Logan was getting interested.

"He sure does," said Emery. "He has a big burglar-proof safe in the office behind the bar, and says it is safer than any of the Houlton banks."

"I see a chance, if you are willing to take it," declared Logan.

"I am willing to do anything," replied Emery, "if there is any possible chance of success."

Logan rapidly outlined a plan of action.

"But that would be breaking the law," remonstrated Emery.

"You fail to distinguish, as many people do," replied Logan, "between 'justice' and 'law,' and that distinction is the basis of my methods. Justice is the ideal condition of human society, and is a remedy for every social and political ill. By that I mean, though, absolute, flawless justice, that justice whose 'seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world, all things in Heaven and Earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power.' Law, as we understand it, on the other hand, is simply a collection of rules and regulations made by Parliament and Assemblies composed of members who may be honest enough, but who, under the most favorable circumstances are bounded and circumscribed by human limits and failings. Therefore, the laws passed by them are simply human efforts to attain to that condition of absolute justice which falls as far short of actual justice as the legislators themselves fall short of human perfection; so in many cases these man-made laws produce actual injustice and hardship. It is, therefore, the real function of a lawyer, not to blindly administer these human laws, but to circumvent them, if necessary, to attain absolute ideal justice. My model in that respect is O'Connell, who boasted that he could drive a coach and four through the best Act of Parliament that ever was written. This case of yours is one where the end justifies the means beyond a doubt, but, of course, I don't want to advise you to do anything you do not care to try."

"It is not that," argued Emery, "for I know I am entitled to the money if I had a fair deal, but I have always felt that no one man can successfully buck the law and get away with it, even if he has justice on his side."

"That is because he is not properly advised," smiled Logan.

"By George, I'll try it!" declared Emery.

"All right," agreed Logan, "and if the Attorney General of your Province takes any proceedings against you, let me know and I will be delighted to come down and defend."

A few days later, Emery strolled into Ellison's place on the Canadian side.

"Good day!" greeted Ellison, genially, from beneath the shadow of the stars and stripes; "anything I can do for you?"

"I understand that you sold the log-hauling patent the other day."

"Yes, and I don't think I made too bad a trade considering everything."

"I suppose you are aware," remarked Emery quietly, "that half of that money belonged to my father as a joint inventor?"

Ellison laughed. "Why, I thought you had given up that idea long ago. I've told you time and time again that I simply hired him to complete a few details and paid him at the time. In fact, the most of his pay he took across the bar here."

Emery resisted the palpable attempt to draw him into a personal discussion. "I'm not talking of that now," he replied; "but you know that father was justly entitled to a half interest in the proceeds and I intend to have it."

"Go to law then," retorted Ellison.

"I think I shall do so; in fact, I have brought my attorney with me and he will do the talking," smiled Emery.

"I should be glad to meet him," sneered Ellison.

Emery placed a revolver on the Canadian side of the bar with the end of the barrel pointing to a vital part of Ellison's anatomy.

"What does this mean?" blustered Ellison. "I will have you arrested if you don't stop your d—— fooling."

"Before you do so," remarked Emery, "you will open that safe and count me out $50,000 in cash."

"I'll see you in h—— first," sputtered Ellison.

"No. But I'll escort you there myself quick, if you don't flash up," warned Emery as his finger tightened on the trigger.

Ellison took a bulky package out of the safe and counted out the required amount.

"Put it down on your side of the line," ordered Emery, "and go back in the office and don't get out of range, please."

Ellison obeyed and Emery backed to the Canadian side door, still keeping the revolver available. The friend who had brought him over in his car was dozing on the front seat.

"Run the car across the line and come in on the American side," he ordered. Then he returned to the bar and pulled a Bangor newspaper over the weapon.

"Mr. Ellison has been paying me some money," he remarked casually, as Brown entered, "and there is two-and-a-half per cent. discount on American money on our side. As this is quite an amount, I wish you would take it down to the bank at Houlton and get Canadian money for it. They will have lots of our money there and will be glad to get rid of it. I will walk back and see you at two this afternoon, if you get back that early."

"Glad to accommodate you," replied Brown as he put the money in his pocket. He returned to the yard, where he cranked the car and started for Houlton.

"How long are you going to keep up this thing?" growled Ellison from the back office.

"You will stay there until two o'clock," Emery remarked pleasantly; "by that time my friend, Brown, will be safely back on the Canadian side."

As the clock struck two, Emery threw down the paper and retreated to the Canadian door.

"You will pay for this," declared Ellison.

"I can do it with your cash anyway," was the retort.

Two days later, Emery was arrested on a Canadian warrant, charging that he did, at the Parish of Richilieu in the County of Lecarnot and Province of New Brunswick on the ——day of—— A.D.——with and by means of threats and violence then and there used by him against the person of one John Ellison to prevent

resistance, violently steal in the presence of the said John Ellison and against the said John Ellison's will, money of him, the said John Ellison, to the amount of $50,000, and Magistrate Cameron, after the usual preliminary hearing, sent the case up for trial.

When court met a few weeks later, the Grand Jury promptly found a "true bill"; the prisoner was arraigned and pleaded "not guilty," and the Attorney General moved for trial.

"I appear for the prisoner," announced Logan. "I am a member of the Quebec bar in good standing, and would esteem it a favor if I were allowed to act in this matter."

The Attorney General promptly concurred in this request, and the Judge, in a few well-chosen words, extended the courtesy of the New Brunswick bar.

The case occupied very little time. Logan did not object to a single juryman; Ellison was the only witness for the prosecution, and told his story very clearly and effectively.

"Where is your home?" asked Logan, when it came his turn to cross-examine.

"At the boundary line."

"There is a bar in the place?"

"Yes."

"And the boundary line runs through the center of the bar from north to south?"

"Yes."

"Where were you when the prisoner arrived?"

"On the American side."

"Did the prisoner at any time cross to the American side?"

"No."

"Did you at any time cross over to the Canadian side?"

"No."

"Was the revolver which the prisoner pointed at you across the line at any time?"

"No."

"And you took the money from your safe on the American side?"

"Yes."

"Was the money at any time on the Canadian side?"

"No; his friend came in on the American side and took it from there to Houlton, as I suppose."

"That is all," said Logan as he sat down.

"That closes the case for the Crown," announced the Attorney General.

"Do you intend calling any witnesses, Mr. Logan?" asked the Judge.

"No," was the reply, "and I would ask your Honor to direct a verdict of acquittal."

"On what grounds?" asked the Judge.

"On the ground," replied Logan, "that the New Brunswick Courts have no jurisdiction in this case. All the evidence shows that the prisoner stood in the Province of New Brunswick and did certain acts, but those acts were not crimes according to the law of Canada. These acts produced certain results on the American side, which results, it is admitted for the sake of argument, were criminal acts, but the criminal acts were committed in Maine; the prisoner is answerable to the laws of Maine and not to the laws of Canada, and this Court has

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Sweepstakes

BY GEO. R. VARNEY

A millionaire disowns his son who, he feels, has married beneath his station in life, but a baby-contest opens his eyes.

WILLIAM SWAIN, Sr., had accumulated unnumbered millions in his immense soap factory, and had become the happy possessor of almost as many more millions that had come to hob-nob with the aforesaid millions, after the manner of millions so to do. Hence the aforementioned William was free to follow such a fad or fads as fancy might suggest.

But William, Sr., had followed the soap business so fast that it wasn't easy for fads or fancies to get within speaking distance of him. Bibliophiles had tried to make a bibliomaniac of him, and enterprising agents had succeeded in selling him numberless first editions in millionaire bindings, but his education had been too far confined to the school of hard knocks to enable him really to enjoy anything more scholarly than ledgers and recipes for making soap. If Mrs. William, Sr., had lived, she would have given directions to his ill-directed efforts to have a good time trying to spend his millions, but, as often happens, having inspired him to amass a fortune, she had got tired and gone to her rest too soon to enjoy spending it.

Three fads, however, William, Sr., had: Billy, Jr., blooded horses, and a family tree. It was hard to tell which came first and which last in William, Sr.'s affection, although Billy, Jr., came first in point of time, and blooded horses second. The two combined, had caused William Sr.'s eyes to turn longingly toward a family tree. William Sr.'s soap was the best soap made, but it had never cleansed his name from the odor of the soap business, nor had his millions paved a golden street for Billy, Jr., to ride over into society. Always a lover of a good horse, William, Sr., had somehow drifted into the ownership of the most noted establishment in the country for the raising of blooded horses, where his attention had been drawn so persistently to pedigrees that he had bought one for Billy, Jr., and had decided that Billy should marry another one. The one he had bought showed that Billy was descended from the Sweyne of the Sweyne's earldom that grew up alongside the other six earldoms in the time of Edward the Confessor, and was related somehow to the well-known Swains of England and America, thus being entitled to place his family tree alongside the noblest trees in the most aristocratic forests.

The family tree that William, Sr., had decided that Billy, Jr., should marry, wasn't really any nobler than

Billy's, but it was one of the Four Hundred and stood out in the open, just where William, Sr., wanted Billy's to stand.

But Billy, Jr., had selected quite a different tree himself. William, Sr., preached his theories morning, noon, and night, and harped on the merits of Elizabeth's tree in season and out of season, but Billy wanted Katherine more than he wanted theories or trees. Katherine, I may as well say right here, was the only really perfect woman in the world, but William, Sr., wouldn't even meet her, because her name was Johnson, and, according to reports that had reached him, was of Swedish extraction, and hadn't any family tree. Billy acknowledged the presence of Teutonic blood and the absence of the family tree, but insisted that she was so far ahead of Elizabeth Rockeweller as a woman that she'd make a family tree to be proud of.

So they both balked, as vulgarly as did ever a Missouri mule, unmindful of the disgrace to the family tree that had been growing since Edward's time. William, Sr., swore that his way was the only way to get their family tree recognized, but Billy, Jr., swore as fervently that his way was the only way to raise a family that would force recognition, family tree or no family tree.

It was blue-blooded pedigrees against warm-blooded eugenics, and they wouldn't amalgamate. The more William, Sr., argued, the worse Billy, Jr., got, and the more Billy, Jr., argued, the higher William, Sr., kicked and the harder he reared, until it looked as if the family tree were in danger of being demolished by a typical Western broncho. Billy thought two or three things to himself as he saw the tree splintering, but he had the good sense to refrain from speaking out loud. He did say, however, that it was Katherine or nobody for him, at which his irate and stubborn soap-manufacturing and stock-breeding *pater* gave the mulish Billy the privilege of choosing between giving up Katherine Johnston and marrying Elizabeth Rockeweller or of being disinherited and set adrift.

Billy, Jr., didn't have William Sr.'s ability to make millions, but he did have the paternal backbone, and so forthwith married Katherine and got a job in a foundry, working like an unpedigreed laborer.

For three years and over, he enjoyed Katherine a good deal better than he had ever enjoyed his daddy's millions, and quite as well as he could if her pedigree had been as long as his own; but the third summer, a fly crept into his ointment. Katherine had always been a superb specimen of womanhood, but this summer the heat began to test even her endurance, and Billy began to worry about her. Half a score a day were wilting in the city, and she began to have a listless air that told of over-strain. Her growing lassitude and his inability to send her to the seashore began to get on Billy's nerves.

If Billy had been himself he would not have gotten impatient with her, although her proposition was enough to make a long-pedigreed saint swear. Eagerly she told him one night of a "Better-Baby Contest" that there was going to be next week, and ad-

mitted that she wanted to enter their baby. Wounded pride and rekindled anger against his father for his injustice, joined hands right there and gave Billy a knock-out blow. Bitterly he denounced his father for disinheriting him; angrily rejected her plea for his permission to enter their baby; bolted hotly from the room, slamming the door behind him, and went for a long walk to cool off. When he came back, Katherine was asleep, or seemed to be, and he was too hurt to waken her and make up.

The next morning, the coolness continued and he went to his work without even kissing her good-bye. After a killing day's work in an effort to forget, he was thoroughly repentant, but repentance could not kill his worry or bring back the roses to her cheeks.

A week of this, and he was ready to undertake what he had sworn he would never do.

The strange young man who took his message in the outer office informed him that Mr. Swain was busy and could not be disturbed. Billy hastily pencilled a note and asked that it be taken in.

"He cannot see you," was the laconic answer brought back in a moment.

Two angry strides brought Billy to the door of the inner office, where he found himself confronted by the stalwart secretary.

"Orders are orders!" was the cool warning. "You can't go in there."

The astonished secretary picked himself up from the farther corner of the room just in time to see the broad back of the intruder disappear behind the closing door.

William, Sr., rose angrily from his desk and glared at his equally angry son.

"What in thunder?" he choked. "I'll fire that confounded secretary!"

"Your secretary's all right," growled Billy, "unless he has some bones broken. Sit down! I want to talk to you."

For a few moments they glared angrily at each other. It was steel against steel, and the tougher piece won. The old man sank back into his chair, but he held his eyes angrily on his son.

"I came to borrow five hundred dollars," began Billy abruptly.

"Not a blamed cent," snapped his father.

"I'm not asking you to give me anything," explained Billy, "but simply asking for a loan. I'll pay you the regular rate of interest, or whatever rate you ask. Katherine—"

"Don't mention your Swede wife to me," interrupted the old man fiercely.

"Don't try me too far," warned Billy hotly. "As I was about to say, Katherine is breaking down under hard work and the heat, and I want to send her and the baby to the beach."

At the mention of the baby, the grandfather seemed for a moment to soften, but then his face hardened again.

"Not a cent for your mongrel—"

With a leap, Billy had cleared the distance between them.

"Take that back," he fairly hissed between clenched teeth, seizing his

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The Man from Honolulu

BY LAWRENCE WILLIAM PEDROSE

A Honolulu swimmer is a society sensation by his remarkable feats in the water. Much is explained by an amazing discovery made in his bath room.

CAP. CAVANAUGH gravely wagged a forefinger.

"I have," he stated, "aboard my yacht in the harbor, a man who can swim Elliot Bay."

He spoke quietly, but had a bombshell been exploded amidst the group on the Arctic Club veranda, it would not have caused a greater sensation. From every side came gasps of incredulity, and a dozen chairs loudly scraped the floor, as their owners turned to stare at the speaker.

It was the evening following Tums Cavil's unsuccessful attempt to swim Seattle's harbor, in which effort that world-famous athlete had lost his life. Cap. Cavanaugh had returned but that morning from a cruise of the Friendly Islands, and as he always brought back from such trips a fund of rare good stories, the boys at the club were wont to single him out and start him yarning. The talk had finally gotten round to the tragedy of the day before, and when it is remembered that many athletes had attempted the four-mile swim from Seattle to the downtown wharves, without one having accomplished the feat, it will be understood why everyone hung breathlessly on the words of a well-known man like Cap. Cavanaugh.

"Yes," he reiterated in the same even voice, "I have a man who can swim the harbor—in fact, he can cross it and return without pausing to rest. If that five-hundred dollar purse which was put up for Tums Cavil, the professional, still stands—and the man of whom I speak is only an amateur—I think I can persuade him to take the risk.

"He is a Hawaiian, and claims to be of royal blood. His name is Kahmee—something; but we call him 'the Duke,' for short. I picked him up in Honolulu. He is well educated and very intelligent; but you know how it is with those brown men—nobody in the islands will give them employment entailing responsibility when whites can be had. I saw him do a few stunts in the surf and offered him a job as A. B., so he could get to the States. He jumped at the chance.

"Every evening, during the run up, he entertained us with stories. There was one in particular that I remember well, and, for a barefaced lie, it outdoes anything I ever before heard. The Duke, though, sticks to it and swears it is true, and he tells it with such evident sincerity that he almost convinces one.

"One night, a Cockney sailor told a tale of pelagic sealing with a Russian ship among the Aleutians, and when he had finished, the Duke be-

gan to question him about the seals.

"It is an established fact, you know, that the fur seal, or otariidæ, as it is known scientifically, because it has ears and belongs to the otter family, spends a greater part of the year in the warm waters near the Equator and makes the long migration into the Arctic for the breeding season.

"When the Duke mentioned this, the Cockney got sarcastic and wanted to know what a nigger knew about it; whereupon the Duke quietly replied that he knew seals better than any other living man, because he had been with them on one of their annual migrations into the north and lived with them for several months. At this the Cockney flared up and called the Duke 'a blyme liar,' so I sent him below to cool off. It was then the Duke told his weird story.

"He said that when he was a kid of four, he was lost overboard one night from one of those Hawaiian native boats during a gale off the islands. He outlived the storm (you know how those little brown kids can swim; it seems as though they are born for the water), and when morning came, found himself out of sight of land and in the midst of a herd of seals, one of which took a fancy to him and adopted him.

"The seals were on their way to the Arctic, but so gradual was the change in temperature of the water as they slowly forged north, that the kid never noticed it. He had had on no clothing to begin with, and Nature soon padded him out with blubber like the seals till he was as roly-poly as any of them. Also, he grew a coat of silky fur, which extended from his neck to the tips of his toes.

"He says the first real discomfort he experienced was when the herd reached the ice-floes. It was a long time before he could accustom himself to sitting on the ice—"

At this point, an explosion of laughter greeted the narrator. He waited till it had subsided, then went on:

"The first month after the herd reached its breeding grounds, the bleak shores of the Aleutians, was a happy one for the kid. He had an abundance of food and all the baby seals for playmates. For hours at a stretch, he says, he used to take them in his arms and slide down the ice-hummocks, or disport with them in the water, playing games the like of which human beings never dreamed.

"Then came the fur hunters, sailing ships filled with big, black-bearded men, who drove the seals inland when they caught them sleeping on the shore or ice-fields and ruthlessly slaughtered them.

"The kid quickly learned to fear the hunters, and, because of his keener senses, became lookout for the herd, perching himself for hours at a time upon some ice-ridge and keeping watch out over the fog banks for the spars of the ships.

"He says he has a hazy recollection of a dark, gloomy day, when he was standing guard as usual, and the hunters slipped up on them in skin canoes under cover of the fog. Caught unawares, the herd bolted inland, the hunters pursuing with club and spear, and soon the ice for acres around was dyed red with the slaughter.

"Only a few of the seals escaped,

and the kid managed to get away with these; but they would have nothing more to do with him, no doubt blaming him for the slaughter of their companions, so he left them and struck off by himself. Alone, he wandered from island to island, meeting with many adventures and many times narrowly escaping the hunters, till he at last came upon another herd that would take him in.

"A few weeks later, when the seals returned to the waters of his home, the kid followed, there to be picked up by a tribe of his own people and adopted by the chief.

"As he grew up, his remarkable ability to handle himself in the water, even in that land of wonderful swimmers, won him fame; but when he reached manhood, he waned as an attraction and had to hunt for work. By being taken up by a college-bred Englishman—one of those wastrel remittancemen, you understand—he got an education, till today he is as choice in his use of English as a professor

"He is only twenty-three now, and as fine a specimen of manhood as I have ever seen. He's quite fair skinned, too, and would pass for a Frenchman or Spaniard any time. I'll bring him up tomorrow night and introduce him. He is every inch a gentleman, and I am sure you will like him."

Cap. Cavanaugh concealed a yawn, glanced at his watch, rose, and with a "good-night, all," sauntered into the club house.

For a long while, the group on the veranda stared at one another in awed silence, then:

"It's impossible!" exploded Patterson, the sporting-news editor of a morning newspaper, and everyone looked queerly at him. "A human being couldn't have had those adventures!"

"I don't know about that," put in Snelling, a friend of Cap. Cavanaugh's and a man whose word carried considerable weight around the club. "I know Cap. quite well, and I am sure that the tales he tells are pretty near true."

Most were inclined to view the story as a yarn of the baldest Munchausen type, but when the crowd broke up, half an hour later, all had resolved to be on hand the following evening and meet the Duke.

The Arctic Club has a very liberal-minded membership, made up, for the larger part, of business men about town, and it opened wide its arms to Cap. Cavanaugh's prodigy, Duke Kahmee.

The Duke proved to be a rather likable young fellow, well dressed, well mannered and not at all forward. Most of the Hawaiians I had ever seen were short, stocky-built fellows who closely resembled the negro type; but the Duke was more like a white man. He was tall—over six feet—slender, and had a pantherlike gracefulness of carriage that suggested great strength. He had thick black hair and clean-cut features, while his firm, yet sensually-thick lips, when parted, revealed two even rows of snow-white teeth.

I could find but one fault with him—that was a vanity of dress that he affected. So extremely high was the white collar he wore that it concealed

his whole neck, reaching to a point just below his ears; but so naturally did he wear it, that, under the spell of his personality, one was willing to forgive him it. I liked him from the start, and inside of an hour we had become friends.

I persuaded him to tell the story of his adventures among the seals, and he gave it almost word for word as had Cap. Cavanaugh. I must admit he was convincing. Even Patterson, who bore the nickname of "Old Unbelief," accepted it with the comment: "Highly improbable, but possible—yes, sir, possible."

Later we took the Duke down to the club natatorium and let him inspect the tank with a view to giving us an exhibition of his skill in the near future, little thinking that we would that very night see it demonstrated.

T. Henry Treat, a personal friend of Cap. Cavanaugh's, was standing on the slippery tiling at the deep-water end of the tank, explaining its construction to the Duke, who stood on the other side, when, turning to a swimming device which was swung to the rafters, his foot slipped, precipitating him into the water.

As the pool at that hour was closed to bathers, no attendants were on hand, and Treat, being unable to swim, sank. I cast round for a swimming belt, intending to jump in and help him, but suddenly the Duke shot past me, cleaved the air, and struck the water at the spot where Treat had last appeared.

Almost before the rest of us comprehended his move, he rose again, several yards out, supporting the form of the now unconscious clubman.

It was an hour before Treat was able to walk without assistance. He departed for the Laurels, his palatial home out on the Sound, insisting upon the Duke's going along as his guest for a few days.

The Duke had changed into dry clothes which had been furnished by the club members, but—and it caused me to wonder at the time—he stubbornly refused to exchange his bedraggled collar for one of mine. I did not insist, knowing that he could have his own soon sent up from the yacht.

Before he left, though, he promised he would swim the harbor the following Sunday, rain or shine, and we all voted him a good sport.

As Sunday was but two days away, preparations for the exhibition were immediately begun. Patterson saw to it that the newspapers made much of the Duke, so when Sunday dawned, excitement throughout the city was rife.

Large crowds thronged the two sides of the harbor when the hour announced for the swim arrived. Cap. Cavanaugh's yacht, with the Duke aboard, steamed to the West Side, where Tums Cavil had made his fatal start; and along with a few of the boys from the club, I was fortunate enough to be aboard. Also, to add interest to the gathering, Treat had brought along his family, which included Ruth, his daughter, a girl of twenty, with whom I was on close terms.

With many pangs of jealousy—for I, too, was an ardent admirer of Ruth and had reasons to believe that my

suit was favored—I noticed an intimacy that had sprung up between her and the Duke during their short two-days' acquaintance. I could not believe that she would ever marry a brown man, but he was a fine fellow, and I was conscious of a vague uneasiness. I think I began harboring a feeling of antagonism toward him from that moment.

When he came on deck, the Duke presented a striking picture. Unlike other swimmers, he wore a black garment that reached from the tips of his toes to the top of his head, leaving only his face and hands uncovered. The upper part of the garment was a hood which he had drawn low over his forehead, and he appeared more like a character one would expect to see on the stage or at a fancy-dress ball than at a swimming exhibition. Truly he resembled a very imp of shadow as he stood poised on the bow of the yacht, slender, his body as symmetically formed as a girl's.

He made but one stipulation: that no boats follow him. As the sky was fast becoming overcast with dark dark clouds, Cap. Cavanaugh and the press boats acquiesced with considerable reluctance. Then, with a wave of his hand and a nodding smile, the Duke took a header into the bay, cutting the water without a splash, and a moment later his black head appeared many rods out. Nor did he head out the Sound, as other swimmers had done, to make allowance for the incoming tide, but darted in a straight line for the crowded wharves across the harbor.

To add to his difficulty, when he was a few hundred yards out, the squall that had been threatening, struck, and soon white-capped waves were sweeping the bay. Immediately the yacht put out to escort him, but he raised an arm and vigorously shook his head; and an instant later, even the spyglasses that had been trained on him constantly from the start, lost him among the waves.

Fifteen, thirty, forty-five minutes, an hour dragged slowly by, and the suspense was becoming unbearable, when suddenly a great screeching of whistles came from the tugs and other boats across the harbor.

The Duke had reached his goal!

Everyone aboard the yacht glanced at his watch, and a murmur of astonishment went up.

The Duke had done the four miles in the almost unbelievable time of seventy minutes!

Several men hastened ashore to telephone for verification, and they came back with the startling intelligence that the Duke already was far out on the return trip, having reported at the goal and left immediately after.

Ruth was the first to make him out as he approached. As he drew near, a rousing cheer went up. He was swimming strongly, and acknowledged the ovation with a playful dive, a wave of his hand and a broad grin.

To everyone's surprise, he refused assistance on reaching the yacht, springing lightly aboard, apparently not the least wearied. He hastened below to change into his clothes, and the yacht steamed back to her anchorage.

When the Duke again appeared on

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Sacrifice

BY EDWIN C. DICKENSON

With the love that passeth understanding, a father gives his life, that a stronger arm than his should live to protect his daughter.

TWO men were about to die. One because he had violated the laws of man, the other because he had failed to keep those of nature. Young Ramon Alvarez, because he had killed another human being; old Don Fernando d'Orosa, because he had chosen to compress the joys of living in a fewer number of years than the allotted span, to be his own executioner. Neither was happy to die, yet each was resigned to his fate. Ramon had seen his last sun set over the purple hills, so perhaps had Don Fernando, but perhaps he had not. The gringo doctor had given him a month and the month was up. Perhaps the gringo doctor was wrong. Unfortunately for Don Fernando's peace of mind, however, the gringo doctor was usually right.

But for Ramon the matter was a certainty. He must follow in the path he had sent that other on. General Guerra had said so and General Guerra's word was final. Life was cheap if cheap lives were taken, but Ramon had taken one dear to General Guerra. And while his own, which was one of the cheap ones, would scarcely pay for the one he had taken, yet it was the only one he had, and to deprive him of it was doubtless as much punishment as if it had been a more valuable life.

It was odd that one condemned should be the goaler of the other. It was queerer yet, that Don Fernando should be the goaler of Ramon.

The General had turned Ramon over to the *Jefe*.

"Guard him as you would your own life," he had said significantly, and that Don Fernando's life was a draining hour glass made its minutes no less valuable—on the contrary. So a doomed man was set to watch a doomed man.

If Ramon had seen his last sun, there was yet the moon. It bathed the adobe buildings in a soft light. It brought a peace to his soul. It raised to the heroic, his deed of the afternoon. It absolved him from the taint and touch of this unrighteous army he had come from Mexico City to join.

A high patriotism had been his when he had joined the revolutionists: a desire to serve and die, if necessary, for the sake of his country. Things had gone from bad to worse. He had been blind to it at first. They had taken cattle—but they must live. They had taken horses—but what was cavalry without? And they had taken money. That had seemed bad enough, but if one have cartridges one must pay for

them. But that afternoon his captain would have taken—a woman. The old Castilian blood, the lofty strain of the grandee, had come to the surface. He had more of it than had his captain.

She was such a defenseless thing—so soft, so warm, so young; all he could remember of her now was her great dark eyes, her masses of shining hair, a small, wide-spread hand at her breast. And Levaro, big, brutish of countenance, towering above her, saying those things which he had said to this convent-bred girl, who could but guess at their meaning.

And then the captain had caught her by the wrist. She had screamed. The great doe eyes had fastened on Ramon's in appeal. On him! He swelled with noble pride. Him, out of all that motley crowd, she had picked. And he had not failed her.

"Let her go!" he had said politely, to the captain.

A venomous glare of authority defied, had been his answer.

"Let her go!" he had repeated, in sudden passion.

And the captain had, and reached for his pistol. But Ramon had been before him. He saw again the look of wonder and then of horror, that had flitted over the other's face, the welling stain on his dirty khaki, his drunken reel as he sank to earth.

Even then he might have escaped; but no. It was not for himself he had done this; it was for the girl. So he had held these rascally *companeros* of his at bay until she had disappeared in the mesquite. And then he had given up his gun, for after all, they had been his comrades. He did not wish to die with their blood on his hands.

It was a new moon, a lovely crescent. Never had it hung so purely in the sky. It carried a message of peace; a message of life. How could one die under that serene heaven? God had never meant it.

And then it was blotted out. A face was at the window. Silently Ramon watched it. Against the light of the moon he saw at length, soft masses of hair. It was a woman. He arose from where he had sat with his back to the wall.

"Is it you?" she whispered.

"It is I," he answered, for he knew it could be none other than the girl.

"They will kill you!" she said, half in question, half in conviction.

"Quien sabe?" he asked lightly. "One can die but once."

"But it is for—me."

"Does that make it the harder?" he asked, with gentle reproach.

"You shall not die," she cried, in a passionate whisper. "I say it—I—Luise."

"Ah, Luise—the name of a queen," he sighed. Even with death hanging over him he could make love.

"The mesquite—where you saw me—there will be horses. You will escape."

He laughed low.

"Love laughs at bars," he answered, "but not death."

"Remember," she said, "the mesquite." And she was gone.

Don Fernando, the *Jefe*, was worried. Even a man doomed may have his worries. It was enough that this general had entrusted to his care one of his murdering soldiers. It was

enough that the loss of his remaining span of life was the penalty of that soldier's escape. But it was not of himself that he worried now, but of his daughter.

Often she had roamed the hills and plains on her swift pony. Often she had been gone from daylight to twilight.

His neighbors had warned him. The *colorados* were slow to distinguish between Federal and revolutionist, be it feminine. And he in turn had chided her. But what feared she? They would not shoot; and where that fleet horse that could out-run her pony? She had yet to see it.

But never had she been so late. The sun was down an hour; the moon bright in the night. He called for the boy Juan, but Juan had gone to lurk in the shadows of the soldier's camp-fire. He could not leave his prisoner. He sat before his door watching the quiet street. They were having a dance—these soldiers. Bah! If they fought as well as they danced, Mexico would have had peace ere this.

"Father!" He nearly fell from his chair. It was the voice of his daughter and it came from within.

His old heart beat painfully.

"Heart of my Heart, would you kill an old father?" he muttered. He went in and clasped the girl to his breast. He clung to her now for support. She did not know. She must not know. But another such scare and he was gone. He steadied himself.

"Where have you been?" There was reproach in his voice, now that he knew she was safe.

"Have you not heard?"

"Heard? No! What was there to hear, but these dancing soldiers?"

"But your prisoner!"

"My prisoner has told me nothing. Poor fellow, he sits dumb in his cell. Tomorrow, at sunrise, he dies."

He felt the girl's convulsive clasp.

"He must not!" she cried.

"Eh? Why not? He can die but once. It is his business to die. Is he not a soldier? He does not care. A fine fellow. Better than these others. He seems a proper lad. He thanked me for his supper. Asked my pardon because he must have so early a breakfast—before he died."

Again he felt the girl shudder.

"He must not die!" she said again. "We must let him go."

"Eh?" He stared at her in astonishment. She did not know that this spelled death for him.

"Listen," she said. "This afternoon I saw the soldiers come. They were friendly. I left the pony in the mesquite; for even friendly soldiers like good horses. Half way to the house I met these soldiers. Their captain stopped me." She hid her face. Fernando trembled—a terrible light came into his old eyes. He held this girl from him and stared at her in the dimness of the room.

"No," she answered his unspoken question. "Because a soldier shot him."

"He saved me the trouble!" muttered the old *Jefe*, his arms dropping to his side.

"And your prisoner is the soldier," finished the girl.

But Don Fernando had already guessed it. Why could not an old

man die in peace? He had hoped to live for her sake, but of what good was his old life in this age of action? Why had he not married her? More than one young gallant would have been glad of the chance. But she was wild and unwilling, and he was weak, and wanted her more than ever for himself for those few remaining days. And now she needed a younger and stronger man to guard her. He had waited too long.

Impatiently she attended on his musings. Time was flying. The soldiers would not dance all night; the officers of the guard might call to inspect the prisoner any moment.

"Come, father, will you let him die now?"

"No," said the old man; "he must not die." To himself he added, "It is I who must die."

He lighted a lamp and led the way through the rambling house to the prison.

"Ho, prisoner! Wake up!" he cried, turning the key.

But Ramon had not slept. He stood quietly watching them. At the sight of the girl, he bowed low. By the dim light of the lamp she seemed some beautiful angel, come to cheer him on his long journey.

The old *Jefe* held the lantern to his face.

"A good head and kind eyes," he remarked as though to himself. "For what are you fighting?"

"My country," answered the younger man.

Searchingly Don Fernando's eyes rested on his.

"Not for gold—not for power—not for pleasures?" he demanded.

"Would I lie to you now?" asked the other sadly.

"You are afraid to die?"

"If you think so, watch me!" answered Ramon proudly.

Don Fernando rested a kind hand on his shoulder.

"But it is not for your country you die."

Ramon's eyes met those of the young girl's. Could he but live to love—

"But it is for—my daughter—you live," continued the *Jefe*.

Ramon looked from one to the other.

"You have saved her honor with your life. Can you guard it as nobly?"

"That were easy," answered the youth, quietly, "had I the chance."

"Come, then," commanded the *Jefe*. He led the way back to his little office. His daughter stepped to the door and looked up and down the great street. Softly came to her ears the sound of music; still they were dancing.

Don Fernando drew from a drawer a belt heavy with gold.

"It is her dot—take it. If you are worthy, you will take her to the land of the gringoes and marry her. If you are not—" for a long minute he glared at the youth—"but you are," he concluded in heavy relief.

The girl entered the room. "Some one is coming up the street," she said; "I hear the jingle of spurs."

"Then, go—both of you!" said the old man with sudden energy.

"I?" cried the girl.

"You," he answered. "It will be no place for you, soon—"

"But I cannot leave you," she cried, with her arms about his neck. Passionately he returned the embrace and then thrust her from him.

"Go!" he commanded sternly; "as a father, I bid you."

Weeping, she took Ramon's hand; then they slipped through the rear of the house down to the mesquite.

All night they rode. Once he thought he saw distant riders behind them, but it might have been a fancy of the moon-ridden night. In the morning, they rode into the mists of the river. A harsh, nasal voice challenged them from the other side.

"What do you want?" the gringo soldier demanded.

"A priest," answered Ramon. The girl's eyes met his bravely.

Love travels fast in this hot land.

They put Don Fernando in the cell of his prisoner. At sunrise he was to fill the prisoner's grave. But before that hour, his old heart had ceased beating.

The decrees of man can be altered by man, but the laws of nature are immutable.

Contract

BY JONATHAN HADLEY

A crowd of Wall Street investors and their wives learn some first-hand information about the salmon industry as a result of a threatening labor strike.

IT was late afternoon in the Gulf of Georgia, when the great, semi-arctic sun, settling over the cone of the islands, cast its peculiar color upon two funnels of smoke, far out on the silvered calm. The water seemed as perpetually still as the glaciers which sheeted the mountains, and fully as empty of life, save here and there, for the head of a dozing seal; the bowers of smoke, in fact, were the only signs upon all that placid area of the millions of salmon beneath.

From the shore of Point Roberts the companion steamers were eagerly sighted. Here, the word, by the strange telepathy of such times, had traversed the white-washed buildings, and down upon the long wharf had hurried a muster of practically all the races the sun has yellowed, or blackened, or browned. An equal number of tongues competed in polyglot clamor, through which reverberated the English syllable, "Fish!" Further intercourse seemed reduced to gestures and grins, for men who cannot communicate will leer to the edge of idiocy to prove mutual understanding. Thus, lithe Chinese in pallid overalls, faded from excessive washing, snickered with stocky Portugese, in overalls murked from excessive usage; belt-high Japanese chuckled with giant Swedes; Indians grunted with Icelanders. And the purport of all was, "Fish"!

Sam Endicott, foreman of the International Packing Company, followed the crowd, with his combination of sailor's roll and San Francisco shuffle. For Sam was of The Mission, when at home—the Bowery of the Pacific. His two hundred compact pounds stopped abruptly at five feet six, graduated by a globe of a head, which was crowned by a canted derby. Sam had never been seen without that derby, a little weather-green now, like the hull of a sea-stained tug—nor without its scrupulous tilt. His bright pink shirt sleeves led from a green vest to the pockets of green trousers; a gloriously red necktie, in which some understudy of diamond was blazing, spanned the pink shirt to his bluish celluloid collar; a mighty gold chain, which would have "snaked" a log, joined the pocket containing his time-book and pencils with the pocket exposing his comb and handmirror. Enveloping the whole was a commensurate subtilty of perfume.

His face was a pink full moon,—of a pinkness his shirt could never plagiarize—shaven and scented each morning, even during "the run," until it gleamed like a varnished bowl. The

impression of well-shaped features remained in a straight nose and sparkling brown eyes; while his hair, parted in the mathematical center, was always precisely trimmed and shaved in a circle around his neck. Yet these attributes of Sam Endicott, one soon came to know, subsided before his vocabulary. Swearing was breathing to him. He swore as another man might sigh—pensively, wistfully—if he were tranquil; like undisciplined dynamite, if he were interested.

By this time it could be seen that one of the craft in the distance was pulling swiftly ahead of the other, and presently, those on shore recognized the beautifully-lined "Kulshan," President Merrack's yacht, which was kept in commission all summer, in order that the New Yorker and other eastern directors might lounge in its ample chairs sometimes, when they ran out for a couple of weeks at "The Aquarium," the luxurious company cottage. It was often said by disgruntled workmen that it cost more to run the Kulshan and the Aquarium than all the fish traps and the cannery combined. So that it was possibly with this in mind that Sam Endicott half closed his eyes, calculatively, firmly, as he watched the sylph-like vessel, and said to Joe Clarke, the bookkeeper:

"I've been readin' some of these here efficiency books, Joe, an' I've fell for it three fathoms under. I've worked like I've never worked before, during these last four months, to git the cannery in such runnin' gear that nothing could possibly slip. Me an' Tom Hobart, of the Fidalgo Packers, has bet two hundred dollars about which can put up the cheapest case of fish this summer. I'm out to git that money. I tell you, Joe Clarke, that I'm a-goin' to put up the cheapest case in the annals of salmon packing."

At the musical chime of the yacht, which was slipping up with pennants trailing from its rakish masts, the press of figures fell away from the bulkhead and silence settled upon them. From them, foreman, fish bosses, and superintendents, had their meed of respect, to be sure; but these great beings from out of that distant radiance of which their own wonderful clothes were a glimmer—these struck upon the motley gathering a singular awe.

Upon all but Sam Endicott. As the Kulshan glided in for a clean, velvety landing against her bumpers, and the natty seamen tossed heaving-lines to embarrassed Scandinavians, Sam did not even shift his weight nor draw a hand from his pockets. To him, Wellington Merrack and his six associates in yachting regalia, or Wellington Merrack's son, or Wellington Merrack's wife, or all the other unbelievably beautiful women (as they seemed in that rugged environment), were merely objects of interest, such as any other casual novelty of the day.

"Well, Mr. Endicott," exclaimed Merrack, shaking hands, and speaking in that high-palated intonation resented as "English" in the west, "it looks like the big run is on."

"Yep," responded Sam.

"Won't you please pilot the ladies over the plant, and show them how you've made ready for the catch?"

By this time the second steamer, a tug, had approached enough for her

train of scows to be distinguishable—not little "pot scows," with their kettles of fish, but five great "deck scows," with their fifteen or twenty thousand salmon apiece. Immediately on the dock there was heard the creak of chains and the chug of the donkey engine, as the long chain-elevator was unshipped to be lowered by the fish-pitching crew. As these in hip-boots fell to adjusting it, grasping at the same time their long-handled, spear-like picks, the blur of voices arose once more, consequent upon the start of the great run of "the big year"—every fourth season in salmon land. But when Sam Endicott led the Eastern party through the door of the cannery, there descended a most unaccountable stillness. The foreman, in searching surprise, glanced back to see the throng clustered about Harhson, a stalwart and sour-faced Icelander.

"Oh, Mr. Endicott," cried Mrs. Wellington Merrack, with a fervor which Sam analyzed as "gush," why don't you send away those dreadful Chinamen? I don't see how you endure them!"

Sam glanced over his shrugging shoulder and noted that the Chinamen were the only ones who were paying no heed to Harhson.

"I say, Endicott," seconded Merrack, "is there really no way of putting up fish without Chinamen? I don't like the idea, don't you know—cheap labor, Asiatics, and all that sort of thing."

The foreman looked about for some other subject upon which to shelve the conversation, but he presently answered:

"They ain't cheap. The butchers make five dollars a day apiece, in the run, and the rest of 'em on down the line accordingly. (For this was before the era of the "Iron Chink"—that ingenious fish-cleaning machine—when the salmon were still dressed by hand, and when the butchers were the aristocrats of the coolies.)

"Nevertheless, I don't like it," returned Merrack.

"Nor I," agreed Merton Cole.

At the "steam boxes," where the cans of fish were to be sweltered for forty minutes, Sam interrupted his explanations of the machinery. Again and again, after the noises had reported to him the landing of the loaded scows, he had turned his head toward the wharf.

"Why in the—— excuse me, ma'am,—but why the——" Sam submerged his synonym in a cough, "why don't they start that fish elevator?"

He crossed the section of the building which they were inspecting and made an attempt to describe the processes at the "retorts," where the cans were to be cooked for an hour, but suddenly he turned and faced the president.

"You people'll have to excuse me so I can go out there and see what's the matter." And then, in some apology for the slight affront to those he seemed to dismiss so brusquely, he added:

"Social secretaryin' don't git up the fish."

Swinging down the great length of the building and out the main door, the foreman stopped abruptly, as he gazed ahead of him. Two or three

hundred men, of the assorted races, were clustered in front of Harhson, now mounted upon a pile. Endicott, with marvelous agile leaps for one of his weight, ploughed his way through their midst. Arms akimbo in the little circle he had cleared for himself, he faced the Icelander.

"What in the name of the incinerated Judas is a-going on here?" he demanded.

Harhson lost color perceptibly, but his big jaw clinched.

"Ve've struck," he said.

The foreman's entire person appeared to swell—his face was a freshet of wrath.

"Struck!" he shouted. "*Struck!* A strike in a fish cannery! Great jumpin' Jeremiah Jehoshaphat! And at the start of the big run! Holee Smithers and Pickled Typhoons! An' after we've been feedin' up you lazy, stumbletoed hulks for four months, now you've—struck!"

He wrested a fish pick from one of the pitchers and swept it around him for emphasis. The crowd shrank back from its sharpened hook. Merrack and the directors appeared with anxious eyes on the outer edge of the circle.

"Struck!" the foreman roared. "Ain't God put it into human heads no more to know what a contract is? Ain't there a single invertebrate one of you white enough to be even a Chinaman? You know'd exactly what you was a-hirin' fer at the beginnin' of the season, an' now that we've got ninety thousand sockeyes a-layin' at our dock, you think you've kicked us to our knees. Struck—I'll show you who's struck—"

He swung the handle of the fish pick toward Harhson and caught the agitator across the solar plexus. With a yell, the man doubled up and disappeared. A tremendous splash was his only other rejoinder.

The crowd dropped back still farther and cringed as the eye of the foreman shot destruction through them. The noisy swimming of Harhson toward the beach was the only sound.

"An' now," vociferated Sam, "I'm through with you! I'm through with any such parcel of mud-hearted whelps. I'd ruther chuck the whole ninety thousand sockeyes into the Gulf—"

An enormous dark Norwegian shambled out of the throng. Gathering courage, he interrupted:

"Ve—ve ain't struck, now," he said.

"Yes, you *are* struck," bellowed the foreman. "You struck onct, you dodgasted, boobdignagian boob, and you're a-going to *stay* struck!"

Wellington Merrack rushed forward.

"But, Mr. Endicott—"

Sam flung his arm toward the tug which had brought the scows, and still facing the insurrectoes, called to the master:

"Hi, Cap—cart this outfit o' saffron jellyfish over to the mainland, an' dump 'em!"

"But, Mr. Endicott—"

So futile did the president's protest promise to be, that the strikers, cowed by the terrible eye of Endicott, began to climb down on the tug, for the foreman also had his hand upon his bulging hip pocket.

"But, Mr. Endicott," Merrack's

voice fairly whistled with confidential fervor, "stop—for God's sake—the company can't afford to lose these fish."

"Can't afford to lose these fish! Well, Mr. Wellington Merrack, if it means knuckling under to a pack of cod-livered strikers, it is the one identical thing you can afford to do. Why, if you deviate now by a sockeye fin, you'll have walkouts on yer hands every blithering time you get loaded under with fish!"

"Yes, I know, I know, but these we've got to have. I authorize you to accede to any reasonable demand."

"Mr. Merrack, salmon ain't hardware. You can't stop to negotiate in this business. It's take it or leave it."

"That's why I say—"

"And that's why I decline. If you give in just onct, they've got you everlastingly on the run."

"But you haven't given in, and they're willing to come back."

"Yet I don't countenance mutiny by takin' 'em."

"Very well, Mr. Endicott—"

"Now, jest hold on, if you please, Mr. Merrack," Sam took a step forward and confronted the president with all his stubby immensity. Merrack gave back unconsciously. "You needn't waste your breath by firin' me, because my resignation is herewith in your hands. What's a job to me—I git a dozen offers a season. But I've got a reputation to maintain from Behring Sea to Frisco, an' I ain't a-goin' to put up salmon at any sich cost as these fellers demands."

Merrack, totally at a loss, stared at his unusual employee.

"Just the same, I'm too good a fish man," continued Sam, "to cut yer hawsers now. Them's the ethics of a skunk. I'm on the job until you can git somebody else. But them quitters —*goes!*"

The president and the directors closed about the foreman in an earnest low-voiced circle. "Put it to him straight, Merrack," advised John Graham. There was a note of pleading in the other's voice as he addressed Sam.

"You see, Mr. Endicott, we're going to take you into our confidence —the fact is, we've simply got to have these fish and every other one we can lay our hands on in the Gulf of Georgia this summer. The—the stockholders are complaining that we aren't producing enough dividends, and they threaten to vote in a new directorate. Now, if you send away these men before we could rustle another crew from Bellingham or Seattle, we'd forfeit perhaps a quarter of a million. No demand of the strikers will equal a tenth of that—which wouldn't make any glaring hole in the dividends. It's good business to keep them."

"Gentlemen, I can't see it."

"But *we* see it—"

"Say, look-a-here," broke in Sam, "will you give me a ship captain's run of this here point and everybody on it, until my successor comes—will you do that?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean jest what I say; disobedience, mutiny, and all that sort of thing, same as at sea. Will you do that?"

Dinner was practically over in the Aquarium, the company's cottage,

and the well-groomed company adhering to dinner-coats and décolleté, even in the Gulf of Georgia, leaned back in their chairs for coffee. The dining room, while finished in light oak paneling, after smart interiors of the day, had an individuality, too, which one must travel to the junction of East and West to overtake. For, though the design was American, the appointments were Oriental—the progeny of incredible skill. Beaded curtains with each sandal-wood bead carved by an elfin chisel, strained the dilution of late sunlight and early moonlight through the windows; a Japanese gong of quaintly patterned brass swung like the towers of a circular pagoda, close to the sandal-wood sideboard. The electric lamp shade over the table was a composite of inlaid woods and brilliants, subdued by the Chinese talent for neutrals, until only faintly animate. The door to the kitchen was hidden by a great teak screen, a very phenomenon of carving, upon which figures as tiny as peanuts moved through the cosmos of Chinese fancy.

The meal had been served by a Chinese butler and two waiters, in flowing jackets of heliotrope satin, light silk trousers, inaudible, padded boots. These attendants, noiseless, deft, irreproachable, had given to the repast that ultimate touch of luxury which only the Orient senses. The courses had been revelations of cuisine—confirming the old saying that San Francisco's most celebrated French chefs were born in Kwang Tung, China.

The service, the shaded lights, the wine, had lifted the company a little out of itself. The talk, which ordinarily might have prosed along to ennui, now rose to aspirations and imagery. Wellington Merrack recited lines from the only verses which had ever probed to his poetic nerve—The Rubaiyat—and Merton Cole breathed clumsy conceits of the flowers to Mrs. Graham. Mrs. John Morris murmured of social injustices. Helen Cole and Edward Merrack, the only young persons in the party, discovered sufficient poetry in each other's glances. All the world was mellow and pensive; the discolorations of life had faded beyond the white Cascades, upon whose glaciers moonbeams now were erasing the hues of day.

Coffee was being delayed surprisingly long, and several times Merrack glanced toward the teak screen for signs of swinging in the kitchen door. This first disagreeable note of the evening suggested those of the afternoon. The president's face clouded.

"That man, Endicott," he said, "has always had an exceptional reputation, but—e-gad—with ninety thousand fish on his hands, to send away his crew! Preposterous, gentlemen, preposterous!"

Mrs. Merrack rang for the coffee. Such prompting had heretofore been superfluous, but now the bell in the kitchen trilled sharply. After a moment, in which the talk entirely subsided, it became clear that there was to be no response. The diners looked at each other perplexed—the women in some alarm. There was no sound in the kitchen. Mrs. Merrack noticed that the Chinese doorboy was gone from his post in the hall. A curious silence prevailed.

"As I was saying," resumed Merrack, less self-possessed than before, "this man, Endicott—"

A thunderous step on the porch checked him. The door flew open, and presently the tense, perspiring face of the foreman was thrust through the portieres.

"Excuse me, gentlemen—"

"Yes, Mr. Endicott, we were just speaking of you."

"Thank you. And I was just thinking of you. I'm sorry to say that I need all of you."

"Need us!"

Endicott nodded.

"What for?"

"To pitch fish."

Merrack, who was half turned around in his chair, sputtered his incomprehension. Merton Cole, whose eyes seemed to double their diameter, murmured blasphemous disbelief.

Endicott took out his gold watch and opening the cover—as big as a stove lid—which he immediately snapped shut, said:

"I reckon you'll have to report in ten minutes. Oldest clothes you can lay your hands on; git boots and slickers at the company store—"

Merrack and Cole both sprang to their feet with faces ablaze. They struggled for precedence in eruption.

"Endicott," cried Merrack, "do you mean to tell us that you expect us to go down and grub in a fish cannery?"

"Damn your impertinence—" began Cole.

"Look here, gentlemen," returned Endicott darkly, "did you give me ship captain's command of this here situation—yes or no?"

"Well, you can have a regular poohbah's command," exclaimed Graham, also rising, "just as soon as the president and directors, having other duties to perform for this company, can get aboard the Kulshan and start back to them."

Endicott turned upon him. "Your crew, Mr. Graham, havin' peeled their chorus boy uniforms, is now pitchin' fish. Your servants is also at the cannery—me and the Chiney boss understands each other. But look here, Mr. Graham and gentlemen, just what is your particular duties to this company?"

"To produce dividends," cut in Cole.

"Precisely. Your business is—to produce. An' I'm showin' you the only way. You ain't got the slightest idee how I can do it, but that's neither here nor there. The only point is, you've give me authority over this here emergency, an'—great cauliflower, ain't there nobody but a Chinaman that knows what a contract is?" Endicott, stepping back, put on his hat and settled it at an especially belligerent cant.

"You've got your orders," he concluded. "In exactly ten minutes, I shut off yer lights and water."

Without waiting for a reply, he stalked out through the hall and down the front stoop, and in a moment his quick crunching step on the gravel walk became the only sound, until the silence was broken by a little outburst of screams from the women, and a flare of curses from the men. Then realizing that they would presently be left in darkness, the entire company was prompted to dash this way and that, with no notion of where.

"What—what'll we do?" demanded Merrack, helplessly.

Helena Cole and Edward had been whispering apart. Helena was just at the age to look trustfully for nobility in men; and Edward was just at the age to want to display it magnificently. He strode forward.

"Do!" he exclaimed. "I'll tell you what we'll do, Father; we'll refuse to welch. I'm off to report to Endicott."

Without turning even to nod to Helena, he hastened out of the house and down the path after the pugnacious foreman.

Under the flickering arc lights at the front of the plant, seven portly figures in top boots, slickers, sou'westers, rubber gloves, and curiously tender faces, laboriously wielded fish picks in flinging heavy salmon from the slippery pile where they had dropped off the elevator, to the convenient reach of the Chinese butchers. This long line of twenty or more expert workmen, swaying forward and back with inimitable economy of movement, became in contrast to their strange apprentices, very scintillations of skill. Their motions, always smoothly rhythmic, were so comprehensive that three or four sweeps of the knife converted a ten-pound salmon into a cleaned and appetizing steak.

An eighth figure among those in the new, stiff and sticky oiled coats was supple and active, and appeared to be taking immense delight in serving as a metronome for the others. His elders, panting, perspiring, but as deadly grim as ever, urchins in a try-out of muscle, worked on and blistered and swore—but continued to work.

The pitchers, having finally supplied their butchers with a slim surplus of fish, stopped at length to mop their foreheads and catch up with their breathing.

"By Gad," exclaimed Merrack, leaning on his pick, "I begin to get this now. Endicott has had the machines reset for 'talls,' which, of course, are filled by machinery and not by hand. If he were running flat cans, he would have had to use the two hundred hand fillers who struck. Now he doesn't need them. Of course, the talls are not worth nearly so much, but the point is that he saves the fish."

"Well," returned Merton Cole, partially closing one eye, "of course there were more than the fillers who struck, or we wouldn't be here pitching fish, now, would we?"

He crooked his finger and his associates drew closer. Cole's experience and ideals for salmon canning had been gained in Wall Street, and upon his face there now appeared the shrewd expression of mid-morning below City Hall Park, New York.

"I've been doing a little figuring," he continued. "That strike, if it had succeeded, would have cost, I find, approximately $30,000. Now, we, in our unofficial capacity, may be considered as holding out for the collective terms of the strikers—for without us, you realize, they couldn't put up the fish. Am I clear?"

"Go on."

"Well, you, I, all of us, in fact, heard the president of this company direct that the terms of the strikers be allowed. A word to the bookkeeper, and they become allowed. Do you follow me?"

Endicott, meanwhile, was an utter marvel of pervasiveness; here one minute, fifty feet down the line of machines another, never pausing idly, lending one hand or both as he scattered instructions. He seized a pick now, and passed from one to the other of his awkward squad, scarcely losing a stroke while he talked, explaining how to grasp the pole in order to profit by the leverage; how to hook the fish with a single thrust, how to fling it so that it would not fly off into the thick of unappreciative directors.

When he had decided that all his recruits were going about as well as they could be taught to do, he glanced down the building at the big clock above the retorts. His fish pick dropped with a clatter.

It was now ten o'clock. He would run until eleven and begin again at half-past four. So far, so good. But who was to get breakfast for the pitchers—who was to get breakfast for anybody? There was not a soul he could spare. As for the Chinamen, they would have to look out for themselves; but no one could ask the white cooks to add the kitchen grind to gruelling overtime in the cannery. Yet the directors, machinists, bookkeeper, electrician, and the crew of the Kulshan, all of whom were at manual drudg[illegible], would require pounds of [illegible]shment apiece on the following day.

Mrs. Wellington Merrack and the other women, timid about remaining at the Aquarium, had retreated to the Kulshan. They had cast glances of horror through the doors of the main building, where their men folks were helping the Chinamen, and then had hurried faster aboard for a conclave of wrath. Upon the face of Helena only, was there a symptom of amiability, and she had lagged behind the others until Edward had caught and returned her encouraging smile. In the salon of the yacht, the two fours finally settled down to bridge, but the "dummies" invariably became so vocal that the others could not attend to both cards and apostrophies.

A startled cry from Mrs. John Graham switched all eyes to the companionway, down which the huge feet of the foreman were beginning to make their way.

"Pardon, ladies;" Endicott fumblingly took off his derby.

This was not granted.

"Can any of youse cook?"

"Cook!" The response was a choral shriek.

"Well, that's too bad," observed Endicott, "because then it would come so much handier."

"An explanation, if you please," Mrs. Merrack collected herself to say.

"Why, only this: there'll be twenty-five famished men, includin' your several husbands, that'll be more than ready for breakfast in the mess house at 4.30 o'clock, A. M. They can't start on no eighteen hour pull tomorrer withouten fuel. Meantime, they gotta rest."

Seven of the eight standing women sank into chairs, with even resistance shocked out of them. Helena Cole remained on her feet.

"I can cook—a little," she spoke, presently. "I've had some lessons."

The foreman reached out his vast hand and shook that of Helena. Then

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he disappeared up the gangway.

When morning had just begun to fringe the east, eight inconceivably sore and muscle-fagged men crept down the stairs from their cots in the white men's mess house. But even as they had been rivals in many financial field days, they were rivals now upon the juvenile plane of grit. Not one would be first to "holler enough." Many breakfasts in many parts of the world had they eaten, but never one which worked into their memories like that dawn-light meal at Point Roberts. Upon the long tables, covered with oil cloth, lamps burned weakly in the grayish gloom. The capitalists slipped into such places as they could find between mechanics and the sailors of the yacht, while behind them paced seven women in caps and sweaters. Now keyed to the occasion, the waitresses kept an alert look-out for the emptying of a pan of biscuits or a platter of bacon and eggs or a pot of coffee, when they would rush with it to the kitchen. Here a business-like young debutante in a cook's cap and apron with sleeves rolled up on her shapely arms, darted back and forth between the stove and the serving-table to replenish the dishes. Edward Merrack, who could not see the competent Helena, stared at the others in sleepy incredulity, trying to visualize in these bustling attendants, the haughty matrons of his acquaintance, who — but the whistle blew.

All day long the pressure of the night before was maintained in the packing plant. By four o'clock in the afternoon, the capitalists, having passed through every gradient of exhaustion, were beginning to gain second wind.

"I never in my life saw anybody devour work like those Chinks," exclaimed Graham to Cole. "When I feel like toppling over, I get ashamed of myself."

"Here, too," assented Cole, and dug in again with his pick.

Graham and Cole were not the only ones to observe, with growing esteem, how, hour by hour, with scarcely so much as a faltering stroke, the Chinese butchers had swung to their marvelous surgery. The quick-flashing knives and rocking forms seemed pieces of one mechanism of muscle and nerve. The physical scope of the work would have broken down other men long before, but these invincible zealots drove at their task with a speed only comparable to their skill.

All down the lines of machinery, where the filling and crimping and topping were under way, the same indefatigable, if less spectacular, gait was in evidence. The widely strung out ranks of seeming automatons bent forward and back to their labor with eyes and face sunken in to vacuums of routine. At the extreme end of the building, the "testers" and "retort men" moved as wraiths through the clouds of steam, plying upon the cans their almost invisibly rapid mallets. Cars of trays, propelled by other flitting spectres, shot through the fog, until the entire establishment seemed a circling maze of dexterity.

Merrack stopped to consider the scene for the hundredth time.

"Phenomenal!" he muttered.

A staccato blast on the whistle

caused white man and yellow to jump. The immediately lowering hum of belts and gears reported that the power had been shut off. The Chinamen, imagining some break in the engine house, trooped around their great pots of tea; but the directors were still wonderingly motionless, when Sam Endicott bolted into the center of their group.

If they had seen wrath on his face in the course of the last twenty-four hours, it had been a moulded beatitude beside the expression confronting them now. He labored to speak, but barbed dictation appeared to stick crosswise in his throat. Jerking his head toward the double door, he marched out upon the wharf. The capitalists followed. Sam stepped on the bulkhead, looming above them like personified accusation. His superiors did not meet his eye.

"What's this—" the foreman swallowed, "what's this the bookkeeper's tellin' me about yer crabbin' the strike money? What's this, I say?"

Nobody specified what.

"You're a sweet boquet of captains of industry, you are, to shake down your own concern, when you're paid exactly to see what yer now havin' to do gits done. Why, them pore, boneheaded Scandahoovians that I kicked out of here was a invoice of the virtues alongside of you! You—"

"But, Mr. Endicott," hastened Merrack, "you know, as well as I do, that no company in the world would expect us to do this kind of work. We're acting here in our private capacity, and our time is worth money."

"So that is it! All right, then; in yer private capacity, I am firin' every blasted one of you—git!"

The directors regarded him blankly.

"I'm out to put up the cheapest case of fish on the books," continued Sam, "an' I'd be gettin' away with it, too, if it hadn't been fer this little Wall Street wrinkle. That would make it the most exorbitant. But just the same, I've figgered that if I throw away all the fish I've now got left, before the new crew comes tonight, I could still save the company $10,000 over what you'd have soaked it. So trot. Go up to the office and git yer dollar and a half apiece."

"A dollar and a half!" exploded Cole. "We aren't Chinamen!"

The foreman considered him for a full half minute.

"You ain't Chinamen? Well, I should swear to the Almighty Gulliver that you wasn't Chinamen! Say, look-a-here; you know that because of the strike we had to shift from flat cans, which is filled by hand, to talls which is filled on the machines, and we pay a good deal less fer 'em, too. Do you realize that on account of this, them fellers in there that you've saw workin' like insane devils all night and all day, knows that they is practically losin' fifty dollars an hour? Chinamen—Hell!"

Without another word, the seven directors grasped their fish picks and re-entered the building.

From Out the Centuries

BY CHARLES J. SULLIVAN

A sailor, deserting his comrades on a South Sea island, marries a native woman, loses her by the sea that made him an outcast, and then Fortune plays her hand again.

IDNIGHT on the Beira plaza of Montevideo, and moonlight on the sea. The captain and I had been sipping Bokadi for hours, and three times he had told me of his son, lost with the "Wanderer," at sea, three years before. And each time I had sighed and nodded and sipped again, because I knew that the old man's grief was dry.

Now I sat and watched the standing lights of the cruiser Arizona, swinging with the tide. That she was swinging reminded me that soon the captain would be going aboard, and with the thought came the old longing for the States. I turned toward him to ask if I might sail with him, but I did not ask. Instead, I followed his gaze into the shrubbery along the sea-wall. I saw a shadowy figure of a man stumbling toward us from the darkness. He did not need to stumble, but he walked with his face turned toward the sea, and only when he ran into a palm or bush, did his dreamy eyes leave the moonpath across the water.

The sound of the waves against the sea-wall bothered him. He clasped his hands over his ears, but still he stared out over the golden path, following it with his eyes, from the horizon's end to where it was splintered at the surf.

"Listen," he was saying. "Don't you hear him calling?" He pointed out over the sea-wall and glanced at us anxiously. "*Can't* you hear him? Listen!"

We heard the babel of voices from the other tables scattered through the plaza; the sleepy squawling of the gulls, and the swish-swash of the water. But the man was repeating in a slow, monotonous voice:

"Listen! listen! don't you hear him calling? Oh, if only that golden path were solid, and I could walk it out to him!"

The bridge-bell on the Arizona tolled the first bell of the mid-watch, and the captain moved as though to go down to the docks. He was to sail at dawn, but for some reason he sat down again and laughed.

"A red rum stew," he grunted, looking toward the man. "It makes them do funny things. I had one come aboard once at Bahia Blanca, who wanted to count the buttons on my uniform. He—". Suddenly the skipper lurched across the table, and clutched my arm.

"Man, look at that face!" he whispered. "Look quick!"

The man had turned, facing the light. His was the face of a Galahad. But it seemed the face of one

who had sought other grails than the holy one. The lips were drawn tightly across the teeth, like those of a man who had often clenched his jaws in pain or sorrow. His chin was trembling, and beneath the bulge of his great coat we could see his little white throat throb pitifully. His dress was that of a sailor in a storm,—a great bulging coat and shapeless pants, and a sou'wester that was much too large for his little head. Yet, withal his strange attire in such a conventional place, the most wonderful thing about him was his eyes. They were great, tender, womanish eyes, that lured your gaze from whatever else about him you were looking at, as a magnet draws a needle.

Those eyes—they stared at everything about him with a vague, babyish wonder, that was childishly strange, above those straight-drawn lips and sea-browned face. The lights were the source of endless amazement to him, and he would not come nearer to them than the end of our table. The table itself, the bottles and glasses, our uniforms, the waiters scurrying to and fro, puzzled him as a mirror puzzles a monkey. Plainly, he had never seen such things before, and, after a dazed inspection, he started to back away from us, into the shrubbery beyond the lights.

"Come back," called the captain laughingly, "come back and have a drink. You look as though you needed one."

At the sound of the English words, in such a place, the man started forward quickly, then hesitated.

"You Americans?" he asked.

"*Si, si!*" grinned the old captain.

He came nearer. Surely he was not English nor American himself, for he spoke with difficulty and with a strange accent, that was not exactly like an illiterate Spaniard, speaking Key West English. I helped the captain to coax him into a seat between us. I passed him a glass of Bokadi, and he sipped it doubtfully, very much astonished that the wine was cold. Though he did not like it, he drained the glass, and it steadied him. He did not speak of the calling voice again, though he turned every few minutes and gazed into the night as though he could see far beyond the path of gold.

"Come, lad," said the captain, with a wink for me, "you act strangely; your words are not like ours. I have never seen such shoes as yours,—nor such eyes in a man. How did you come here?"

When the boy looked up, his eyes were sparkling with tears. He spoke softly:

"You Americans—like Jimmy?"

"Like Jimmy?" smiled the captain. "Yes, we're Americans like Jimmy,—like Jimmy used to be," he added under his breath.

"You know about New York?" asked the lad.

"Yes; I sail for there at dawn.'

"You know about a place called Virginia by New York?"

"By New York?" laughed the skipper. "Yes; I live in Virginia. I'm a F. F. V. It's a big state, you know." But the lad did not know.

"You know about Jimmy, eh?" he asked. "That's where he lives. What you call 'my dear old dad' lives there now, but Jimmy—" he turned again

and looked out over the sea.

Something in the boy's constant use of the name, startled the captain, and made his old lips tremble.

"Jimmy?" he asked. "Jimmy who? Did you know his last name?"

"Kerry!" said the boy promptly. "Jimmy Kerry."

The old man gasped and fell back in his chair as though he had been struck, and I could only sit and stare. Presently, I went to the captain and straightened him in his chair. I feared for his heart, but in a few minutes he laughed at his foolishness.

"It can't be, can it? He was on the 'Wanderer,'" and he smiled up at me sadly. Then to the boy:

"No, I don't know about Jimmy—about this man. Who was he? Where did you see him?"

"Jimmy was on the 'Wanderer,'" said the boy. His words were the ones we had been whispering to ourselves! The old captain had driven away the flutter of hope by mumbling them. In our dumb silence the lad went on.

"He came to our island on the 'Wanderer' a long time ago. She went back to her home, but Jimmy stayed—he loved—he—"

The captain leaped forward like a tiger.

"Say it again!" he cried. "Say it again! What was the name of the ship?"

"The 'Wanderer,'" said the boy.

The old skipper reached out and clutched a wine glass. The stem snapped like an icicle. He held a match to his cigar, but his hand trembled and shook it out.

Every sea-goer remembers the "Wanderer," as every American remembers the "Maine." Five years before, she sailed from Hampton Roads on a special service mission, to find and chart an island which had been reported by a storm-driven tramp, about five days out from Montevideo. She had been gone nearly a year, when she was sighted on her homeward cruise off Maise Light. From there she had "wirelessed" by way of Guantanamo and Key West, that she had found the Island, but after that, she had never been heard from. Scout cruisers picked up one of her boats and two buoys, but nothing else of her was ever found. That was three years ago.

Now, here before us was a grotesque figure of a man, with soft womanish eyes and sea-browed face, telling us of the same ship, and of one of her crew. We sat silent before him for a long time, while he stared around him like a baby in a zoo. The beautiful women with their brilliant dresses seemed to interest him more than anything else, and he asked unanswerable questions concerning them.

"Won't you tell us about the 'Wanderer,'" asked the captain quietly.

"She came to our island a long time ago," said the modern Galahad.

"What was the name of your island?"

"We called it the Isle of Magelhaens until Jimmy came. He made us speak American all the time after we learned it. You would call it Magellan's Island."

"How many of you were there on the island when the 'Wanderer' came?"

"How many?" said the boy doubt-

fully. "Oh, I don't know. We never counted each other. There were all the Bontouri families, the Verrazanni, the de Cotres, the Maluci, and our house, which was the largest, the Matavi. I suppose there were five hundred then, and many more buried on the hill by the old church."

The captain and I sat back in our chairs and gasped.

"Five hundred of you and many more buried by the church?"

The lad was surprised at our surprise.

"Didn't the men of the 'Wanderer' tell you about us when they came back?" he asked.

I heard the bell of the big cruiser strike the first hour of the mid-watch; a launch put away from her side and came bobbing shoreward. The skipper did not see it. He saw nothing of the thinning crowds around him. He watched the lips of the boy, afraid to miss a word.

And those words were not ones to be missed! We were hearing a tale from out the centuries, a reading from the logs of Captain Magellan of four hundred years before. I smiled a little at first, but as the lad went on telling how he had learned all this from a log written by one of Magellan's captains after he had been wrecked with a ship load of women and men on a strange island, I began to believe him, for I remembered.

I knew enough of history to know that when Magellan reached the straits that now bear his name, two of his captains deserted with their ships, and turned back for Spain. One of them dropped into Ferrol a year later, but the other, a barkentine, under the command of Captain Mesquita, was never heard from again. In my imaginative days at school I had often wondered what had been the fate of this preciously-laden ship. Had it drifted into the jungle shores of Brazil or the dune-covered beaches of the South? Now here was a boy telling us that it had been wrecked on a tiny island in the equatorial Atlantic; that its crew and their women had made the place into a paradise, and had lived and prospered there; that he, himself, was a descendant of them.

In quick, gasping phrases, he told us as much as he had learned from the ancient logs about the strange island and its new race. He told of their strange, socialistic laws and customs, and he told of his own youth and the queer games he and the other children had played on the palm-fringed shores. But when he began to speak of the "Wanderer," his voice grew softer, and I thought there was a tone of pride in it. When he spoke of the surprise of the men at finding white men on the island, he laughed like a child, but the next instant, when he told of Jimmy acting as interpreter, tears started into his eyes and he looked away over the sea.

"Jimmy," said he, "was the only man of the crew of the 'Wanderer' who learned to understand us. Others of the officers could speak Spanish but it was the sort they do not speak in Spain, and Jimmy said that our language was so pure that the men who had learned Spanish along the coast could not understand it. So Jimmy was detailed as interpreter and to study us, and to find out if we wanted to leave the island. He was with me

most of the time, for I was the school-teacher then, and—and—"

The boy hesitated a little, then glancing shyly at the captain went on.

"In a few days Jimmy was in love. There was the old church on the top of the hill in the middle of the island, and this girl whom he had begun to love was about the only one who knew how to get up to it without wading through an ocean of vines. This girl's name was Arda of the Matavi family.

"One day, while the party from the ship was prowling around the beaches with paper and pencils and measures, Jimmy and Arda climbed the trail to the little church. In the olden days, the people used to go up there to worship, but when gold was found beneath it, another smaller shrine was built along the shore, and everybody was forbidden to visit the old church. The old men feared that the gold would cause discontent and trouble, and they ordered the mine to be covered. Enough metal was taken out to make a few trinkets for the women, and for things that were needed around the home, but that was all.

"The church was not so interesting as Jimmy had expected, nor the mine either, for after roaming around awhile, he led Arda out on to the moss-covered facade, and there they sat silent a long time. At the foot of the hill they could see the strangely dressed men and boys working among the yams and pineapples. Along the beach were a few idlers, or old men, watching the 'Wanderer' as she swung with the change of tide. Jimmy, too, saw the 'Wanderer,'—saw the men holy-stoning the white decks of his sea-home, and the officers pacing up and down the quarterdeck. He knew that in another week he would have to return aboard. In a month she would be back in the States. Did he want to go without this little pleasant-eyed girl who loved him? He turned toward her and saw that she, too, was watching the ship. Her lips were parted in silent wonder. Her eyes were wet with unshed tears. She loved this beautiful island, she loved every one of the people on it. Often she had wondered what was beyond the blue line where sky and ocean met, but her wonder had never become a longing. Now she had come to love this stranger. Would she want to go away from the island with him? Her throat and bare shoulders were golden in the light of the setting sun. She knew that she was beautiful. Suddenly she caught her loose camisa closer to her breast, and turned to the man at her side.

"They did not need to speak, but in the same breath they whispered the English words, 'I love you.'

"Then, as the afterglow faded from one cloud to another, until it was only a red splotch in the west, Jimmy asked the question which he had so dreaded to ask.

" 'Arda,' he whispered, 'will you go back with me when the "Wanderer" sails?'

"Arda, too, dreaded the question, but she answered quietly, 'Yes, I'll go anywhere with you.'

"At dark, she led him back through the dim trails to the homely village by the sea, led him by the hand to her father's house, and in front of her aged father, himself. And Jimmy talked to the old man, and Arda plead

with him, but in vain. The Britons might take any of the people who wished to go, but Arda could never leave the island. That was final. Matavi liked Jimmy and gave him permission to make his house his home until the 'Wanderer' sailed, but at that time he must leave Arda behind.

"In the morning, Jimmy went out to the ship and brought back books and papers and maps. He read to Arda of the fall of Spain; and of America, the land of which she had never heard. Day after day, they went to the church on the hill, not to gloat over the hidden wealth there, but to be alone and to study. Jimmy put a dot in the middle of the great Atlantic and taught her the exact location of the island. He explained to her why no other ships ever touched there, and why, every day, great steamers passed within a few hundred miles of it without ever coming near. But most of all, he talked of his native country, his home, his mother and his dear old dad, who was a captain in his country's navy. Arda was always interested, but all she said in English was, 'I love you'!

"At last, came the day before the dawn of sailing. Old man Matavi and Jimmy and Arda, held a long consultation. In the afternoon, Jimmy went out to the 'Wanderer,' and returned immediately with a bundle beneath his arm. He was very calm and smiling. From the house of the Matavi, he and Arda slipped out to the trail leading up to the church. At dusk Arda came out carrying the bundle. Jimmy climbed on up to the church, and ascending into its tower, sat and looked down on the beach. He tried not to look at the 'Wanderer' at all, but when he did, his eyes were misty.

"By a roundabout way, Arda came down to the beach where Jimmy was accustomed to take his daily swim with the other officers from the ship. There she unwrapped the bundle and took from it an ensign's white uniform. She was laughing joyfully, hugging the soft blouse to her breast. Carefully, she strewed the clothes on the beach, a few yards back from the water. Then looking up to the tower, that loomed weirdly against the sunset sky, she removed her shoes and the cocoa tapis from about her hips, and tying them on her head, she walked down the sand into the water. When the smaller waves began breaking into her face, she waved her hands at the turret window, then swam down the shore toward the village.

"So the 'Wanderer' did not sail at dawn. She fired one of her saluting guns to greet the sun, rang eight angry sounding bells for Kerry's return, and unfurled the recall pennant at her foremast. When the sun had climbed high above the church on the hill, a boat was lowered and rowed hurriedly ashore. The officer in charge came directly to Arda and asked about Ensign Kerry. She told him that he had been seen last going down to the beach for his plunge. The squad hurried down the shore, and Arda and half the population followed after them. They found the uniform on the beach, saw the footprints leading down to the water, and none returning. Out across the bar they saw the green triangle of a shark's fluke, slipping through the water. A signal boy wig-

wagged the message to the skipper, and after a few minutes, a boy from the bridge signalled for them to return aboard. At noon the 'Wanderer' got under way, and we never saw them again."

The old captain's face was a ghastly thing to see. He stretched out a trembling hand and caught the sleeve of the boy.

"And Jimmy Kerry?" he croaked. "He deserted? He remained safe on the island, and his ship went out to her doom? He deserted, and for the sake of a girl, a spiggoty girl? Oh, Jimmy, Jimmy!"

Very gently, the lad unfastened the fingers from his sleeve and placed the hand beneath his on the table.

"Jimmy said," he whispered, "that his dear old dad would have done the same for his mother. Do you suppose he would?"

The captain didn't answer. Across the bay, the beacon of the Mount and the Beira lights of Montevido glistened like the settings for a fantastic play. A waiter came with bottles and ice, and at the sight of our faces, he winked wisely at me and went laughing away.

"That same night," continued the boy, in a voice that was so much the same that it seemed forced, "that same night, Jimmy and Arda were married. De Pausi, the priest, married them. Old Matavi gave them the house that had belonged to Alvaric, the gardener. There they lived and were happy—how unearthly happy, I cannot tell you. Jimmy became a fisher, and all were glad that he had stayed—all but one. Alvaric considered himself doubly insulted. First, it was known that he had long admired Arda, and second, his house had been taken from him and given to his rival. Alvaric swore to be revenged. He was not a bad man—just a Spaniard in love. For the first time in the history of the island, a man was forbidden to enter a neighbor's house.

"When the 'Wanderer' had been gone a year, a little fair-haired girl came to Arda. She was named Virginia. Oh! in those few months they were happy. The baby was different from any that had come to the island. It drew the wonderful American nearer, made the little stone hut brighter, and life more worth the living.

"Jimmy was a fisher, but in the two years following the departure of the 'Wanderer' he had done more than supply the tables of his foster countrymen. He had built many little sloops for deep-sea fishing; he had spun great nets and cast-lines of pineapple and cocoa fibre; he worked the mine below the floor of the church and filled the houses of the people with queer trinkets of solid gold. A diamond which Matavi gave him, he worked into a setting of gold for Arda, tracing her new initials inside the band.

"When Virginia was two years old, Arda was required by custom, to do her share of her husband's work. When he had shoaled a large school of bluebacks within the bar, Arda would go out in her own sloop and help to net them. And often when Jimmy had other work to do ashore, Arda went out beyond the bar alone."

The boy fell silent for a minute. He sipped at his wine slowly, then hid both his hands below the table.

When he spoke again, his lips were trembling. The captain did not heed the whistling of the launch at the landing below the plaza.

"One morning Jimmy started early for the church. Arda left the baby with a neighbor, and going down the beach, floated the deep-sea sloop which Jimmy had made for his own use. She brought down a breaker of water and her dinner, and then, when the tide was high, she pushed away from the shore and tacked out over the bar among the swells beyond.

"From his shack on the side of the hill, Alvaric was watching these proceedings anxiously. Suddenly he ran down the hill toward the beach, shouting at the top of his voice. Then he realized that she would run all the faster for his calling. He could do nothing.

"There was a brisk wind blowing off the island and the sky threatened a storm before night. When Arda reached the fishing grounds, about four miles off shore, she cast her lines, dropped her drag anchor over the side, and settled back to read one of the books Jimmy had smuggled from the 'Wanderer.' Long before noon, a gale was blowing. Arda drew in her lines and headed the wind, for the cove entrance. The sail bellied out gaily in the breeze, and had the island been in the other direction, she would have made it in an hour.

"She had not gone far when it happened. The stay of the mainsail snapped at the gaff, the boom whirled inboard, breaking the lash at the topmast with a sickening thud, and both the main and jib sheets fluttered noisily over the board. She carried no topsail, and if she had, she could not have mastered it. She swung the oars into place and strained her back in a last endeavor to change her course. With the first pull, the port oar snapped like a pencil, leaving only a useless club in her hands. In consternation, she looked closely at the remaining oar, and as she looked, her blood ran cold. Perhaps for the first time in her life, she was afraid. The piece had been neatly sawed just below the balance. One stroke and it would break.

"The wind was carrying her away from the island at seven knots and the gale was growing fiercer every minute. The little boat was riding the swells well, but it was not the storm that she feared. It was what must come after—the long days when she would drift alone and helpless ever farther away from Jimmy and her baby. No words of mine can make you understand the agony of the next two days. The storm lasted only through the first night, but the wind blew steadily, and her little craft sped on into the unknown, like a clipt gull before a storm. She had not slept, and the terrible loneliness was driving her mad. She raved at the bare mast, ogled the triangles of the sharks that followed her, and laughed herself to sleep.

"When she awoke she was in a musty cabin of a ship that sailed like the 'Wanderer.' There were bearded men standing over her, and she felt hot brandy in her throat. When she was able to talk, the story she told, or tried to tell, convinced the men that she was crazy, and so they treated her tenderly. They were Spanish

from the port of Ferrol, bound for here, Montevido. For what seemed years, she lay there in the cabin. Visions of Jimmy and Virginia came to haunt her, and she tossed and raved like a mad woman.

"Then, after many days, the ship lay still beside a dock. Staring through a port she saw strange sights, —things she had never seen before. She saw more men than she had dreamed were in the world. They were running to and fro, carrying things on little carts. The big wooden buildings frightened her, and the smoky air and noise set her to raving. Then she turned, and looking out over the sea, she became quiet again. At evening, she removed her outlandish dress and put on a suit of dark clothes, which hung in her cabin. Then, before the standing lights were lit, she walked down the gang plank. She wandered aimlessly through the streets, hungering for the sight of a familiar thing. Tired in body and soul, she turned instinctively toward the water front. She missed the docks and brought up against a vine-covered wall. Following this in the darkness, she came—she saw—oh, can't you see?"

The little hands came up from under the table and trembled over the big hand of the captain. The head bowed forward on the table, and the sou'wester tipped and fell to the ground. A great mass of silken hair tumbled out upon the table. The slim white shoulders, that showed beneath the great coat, shook with silent sobs.

Slowly the old captain reached out and touched the strands of night-hued silk. His hand slipped lower to the girl's left hand and fumbled with the ring which glistened there. She raised great tender eyes to him pleadingly. He bowed and kissed the ring.

"Come," he said tenderly, pointing down to the docks, where a launch was still tooting its whistle. "Come, we sail at dawn."

The girl drew back, and her eyes were saucersful of tears. I bowed down and touched her hand.

"Trust him," I said; "this is Captain Kerry of the Arizona. He wants Jimmy, too!"

The Circle

BY HARVEY FERGUSSON

In dramatic form, the author has presented a truth to which many a desert rat has attested with his life.

FROM the crest of the slope where Guadelupe lay in wait, the German peddler and his burro coming across the desert looked like a large insect and a small one creeping slowly over a sunlit floor. There was no other living thing in sight except the wheeling buzzards above them.

Guadelupe flattened himself behind the scant cover of a small Spanish bayonet plant and cocked the hammer of his Winchester. His swarthy cheek nestled against the stock; he drew a careful aim, and the copper bead of the rifle sight covered the breast of the unsuspecting peddler. Guadelupe knew that he could kill his man with certainty at two-hundred yards, but he resolved to wait until the peddler had crossed the dry, shallow arroyo at the foot of the slope. There was neither trail nor road across that part of the desert; the peddler was taking a short cut. In the little gulch his body would be meat for the coyotes and buzzards, and no man would ever find it.

The peddler's pack contained a bracelet in the form of a heavy silver circle set with turquoise, which had fascinated the great black eyes of the Senorita Catalina Martinez in the town of Las Lunas, twelve miles to the south. Those same black eyes had thrilled Guadelupe with the desperate passion which belongs to Latin blood. He would dare anything to bring that passion nearer fulfillment. And he had no money with which to buy the bracelet.

The peddler and his burro disappeared for a moment in the arroyo. Guadelupe rose to his knees and crossed himself; then settled back into his ambush. First the head of the peddler and then half of his body came slowly in sight as he toiled up the bank. Again the copper bead covered the man's breast, and this time the rifle cracked.

The peddler clasped his arms across his chest, coughed, and fell forward. In his death struggle he rolled to the bottom of the dry waterway and brought up, sitting, against the bank. His head lolled forward; his eyes were wide and staring. So he died.

Guadelupe came to the top of the bank and peered over. He felt a shudder of terror as he saw the ghastly result of his shot. The broad, sunburned visage of the dead man had turned a pale yellow, while the blood made a dark pool between his knees. The burro was quietly cropping the dry grass a few yards away. With nervous, fumbling fingers,

Guadelupe stripped the pack off the animal and found the bracelet. He took also a wooden crucifix and a gaudy red silk bandana handkerchief. These he thrust into his shirt front, kicked the rest of the pack into the arroyo, and turned toward the town.

The sun was going down behind far mountains in a glowing mass of cloud. All afternoon the soft cumulus, edged with a dark promise of storm, had been piling up on the crest of the range. Now it was lit with colored fire and loomed immense and terrible. As the sun went lower, the cloud mass rose and spread, arching across the sky; so that when dusk came the familiar outline of the mountains was hidden.

Before Guadelupe had gone a mile, darkness had fallen, and he cursed the peddler for having been so slow. Straight overhead, a few stars twinkled, and one great golden star shone directly before him. Toward this, he laid his course and hurried onward. In the still heat of the desert night, his breath came hard, while he slipped in the sand and stumbled over low, ground-clinging cacti.

The guiding star disappeared suddenly, like the light of a snuffed candle. He looked up and the last star overhead was also gone from view. The clouds had completely covered the sky and the desert was a black emptiness without mark or limit. Guadelupe went forward faster than ever, following the blind guidance of instinct.

A gaunt black form, with two outstretched arms, loomed before him, and a quiver of terror shot through his body. For a moment he stood staring, then drew nearer. The startling form proved to be that of a great tree cactus, a bulbous branching thing without leaves or fruit, and by its presence Guadelupe knew that he had lost his way. He had never seen the great cactus cross before and had no idea in what part of the desert it grew; but he was certain that it was not on the way to Las Lunas. For several minutes his bewilderment was complete, for he had felt sure of the direction. But he did not acknowledge to himself that he was lost. The desert was like a familiar map to him; he could picture it in his mind. A moment of concentration, and he felt sure which way lead homeward. Then he started off again, hurrying more than ever, to make up the lost distance.

In a little while his breath was coming in gasps and he was trembling and drenched with sweat; but still he did not spare himself. Thirst had begun to torture his mouth and throat, and with it had come fear, for he knew that thirst in the desert soon became madness. Already there were dancing forms and colors before his eyes, and vague, disturbing images that peered at him from the darkness. Sometimes he saw the mocking, provocative face of the girl Catalina, and again, a more terrible thing—the yellow face and staring eyes of a dead man.

For hours, he rushed ahead, spending the last of his energy; sometimes running to escape the fearful shapes in the darkness, and still he failed to see the far, scattered lights of the town. His mind was becoming confused and all things seemed remote,

but he clung desperately to the belief that he was holding a straight course homeward. His knees were shaking, and every time that he slipped and fell, it was harder to rise. Finally he was staggering, tracing a zig-zag trail in the sand, and he knew that his next fall would be the last one. He prayed that his efforts had carried him near the town, that the boys driving out the goats in the morning would find him. Suddenly he plunged over a low bank; his head struck a rock and consciousness went out in a shower of splintering lights.

The sun burning his face brought him back to his senses. He lay flat upon his back. His broken head was throbbing with pain, his swollen tongue filled his mouth, and his whole body was inert with weakness. High above him, half a dozen buzzards wheeled in patient circles, waiting for the blazing sun to finish its work.

Gradually his memory brought back the images and sensations of the night before: the mad rush across the desert, the choking thirst, and the dead man back there in the arroyo. He felt a shudder of horror.

Striving to move his legs, he found himself almost helpless, and knew that he could scarcely creep. For some minutes he made no effort to raise his head, knowing that what met his eyes would be life or death. He prayed that he might see the green ribbon of the valley shot through with its silver thread of blessed water. The image was so vivid that he felt almost sure the reality was near. He fancied that he heard the far tinkle of goat bells and the singing of a girl. The imaginary sound brought before his mind the face of Catalina with her deep eyes and eager mouth. By a mighty effort he raised himself upon an elbow.

His eyes met the glassy stare, the drawn yellow face of the dead peddler. He had travelled the inevitable circle of the lost.

In the Thick of It

BY HELEN E. HASKELL

We present this unusual and timely story of war to readers of Black Cat to take from it the lesson it teaches.

DAY would break in an hour.

Adolf Streichen raised himself on his elbow and gazed down at the figure, wrapped in its army blanket, lying beside him. In the dim light it looked like a roll of newly turned earth and beyond it were other rolls, inarticulate, apparently lifeless.

Suddenly the nearest one developed arms. They stretched toward the sky. Another moment, the blanket was thrown back and Fritz von Pau sat up, yawned, struck his chest lightly with his fists and turned toward Adolf.

"How goes it, cousin?" he asked, his teeth gleaming like a white streak in his dark face. "Blisters any better?"

Adolf fancied a covert sneer in the question. He cursed softly, gathered his blanket about his shoulders and sank back upon his knapsack.

He was sore from head to foot. His feet were covered with blisters, his army shirt stiff with blood that had trickled from wounds on his face and neck, cut by the barbed wire into which he had stumbled during the retreat.

The mere memory of yesterday's carnage nauseated him.

How many men had he felt writhing under his feet as he had stumbled forward in the attack that had lasted for hours? His sleep had been tormented with the nightmare of their groans, as the lines had plunged over them in that headlong advance. Twice he had fallen, only to be dragged to his feet again by Fritz von Pau, who had fought like a mad man as they had charged into that hurricane of shot and shell, charged and charged again, while the rapid-fire guns of the enemy had mowed them down until, at the end of the day, the battle field had looked like a sea with seething waves of human flesh that had but a little while before been men.

All day they had fought, their throats parched with thirst, their brains numbed with the awful thunder of the cannonading.

Then the retreat—how long had that lasted? Had it been one hour or ten that they had gone stumbling back over boulders and fallen trees; over great piles of their own dead comrades?

And in another hour, day would break. The slaughter would begin again. Was there no way of escape?

Again he rose on his elbow, peering furtively into the shadowy boles of the trees, that had given his detachment temporary shelter. Somewhere beyond the trees there were

water-filled trenches. If it were not for Fritz von Pau, who slept lightly, he might slip away. His wounds would be excuse enough if they found him. He pushed back his blanket. He was a soldier, not a butcher, and he had had enough of slaughter. Cautiously he drew up his knees.

And again the man beside him stirred, opened his eyes, sat up and faced Adolf, whose guilty purpose of a moment before seemed suddenly lighted up and understood.

"Can't you sleep, old man? What's the row?"

"The cursed barbed wire cuts have given me a fever." Adolf reached for his canteen.

"Hard luck, comrade."

Again Adolf fancied the covert sneer in his cousin's tone.

"Another man would be in the hospital. I'm unfit for duty. But this war is all favoritism and politics—"

"Don't talk like an idiot," interrupted Fritz von Pau, drawing his watch from his army shirt and snapping it open. He smiled into a pictured face in its case, closed it and settled to sleep again, the watch beneath his cheek.

Adolf Streichen ground his teeth. He hated the war, but even more he hated this cousin who slept with the picture of little Marie von Schallern under his cheek. He could not look back over the twenty-four years of his life and remember an hour when the thought of Fritz von Pau had not been like a sore spot on his soul, like a canker, born of envy and fostered by the other man's indifference. For Fritz von Pau took his cousin with a shrug of the shoulders. He despised him for being a welcher and a coward. If the question of rivalry between them had occurred to him he would have laughed, for he laughed easily, taking life with frank lightheartedness. Men loved him for his courage and fine sportsmanship, women adored him for his gallantry, one and all of them envying pretty Marie von Schallern who had been courted steadfastly and uselessly for a year by Adolf Streichen and whose engagement to Fritz von Pau had been announced two days after their first meeting.

Adolf Streichen doubled his fists at the recollection of his humiliation, sat up and again looked down at his sleeping cousin. Already, although the war had endured but a month, Fritz was wearing the iron cross for valor. The sight of it in the dim light frenzied Adolf. If he only dared, he would send his clenched fists smashing into his cousin's handsome young face. But he did not dare. In spite of his big shoulders and bull-like neck, Adolf Streichen was a coward.

The high courage that would send Fritz von Pau singing to his death in his country's cause, he could not understand. The one big emotion of his life was his hatred for his cousin, mingled with the tormenting desire to make Fritz acknowledge him his peer.

"Luck will turn some day," he muttered as he pulled his blanket over his chest. "And then I'll show him."

He closed his eyes, but dread of the coming day and that ever increasing rancour toward his cousin, prevented sleep.

He heard a cock crow in the distance. The homely sound suggested forage. He got to his feet, then stood still, petrified with horror. For in the graying light, swarming up the hillside like ants, he saw the enemy. A shell whirred through the tree tops, bursting almost at his feet.

The next moment guns were popping like firecrackers. Officers rushed here and there, roaring orders which nobody heeded or heard.

For the hillside had become a death trap. Resistance was useless. They were outnumbered, ten, twenty to one. The one thing was to save themselves. Boots, cloaks, guns, were abandoned in the retreat that was a rout, and in the midst of which Adolf Streichen stood dumb, motionless in his terror, his knees gone suddenly useless, almost doubling beneath his weight.

Stretched out, less than six feet in front of him, was his company's flag. He shuddered. Another minute and the useless rag would be trampled under the feet of the enemy, it and he. Still he could not move.

Something struck his ankle, brought him to his senses. He reeled backward with a yell of despair. He was shot—no, that thing at his feet is the bared sabre of Fritz von Pau, who has seized the flag and is waving it aloft.

Ah! That fool, Fritz, is down now, on his knees, but the flag is still in his hands, flaunting its colors in the very faces of the shrieking horde swarming the hillside—black men, with gleaming white teeth, wearing the uniforms of English soldiers.

"Adolf!"

What was there in that single word that sent the blood romping, roiling through the veins of Adolf Streichen, turned his muscles from jelly to steel, found him a-straddle his cousin's prostrate form, fighting with his sword, his clubbed rifle, striking out madly, shouting like a demon, words that were but half intelligible, words that ran like a subterranean stream beneath the noise of the conflict?

"I'll show you the stuff of a man!" His blade sent a black fiend reeling. "I'll show you, Fritz von Pau!" Thrust! A black man on his face, a wound gaping in his throat. "Sneered at me! You'll see now the stuff I'm made of." The sword, broken short at the hilt, had found an enemy's vitals. "I'm saving your life now, curse you, giving my life for yours!" Thud of a rifle butt wrenched from a falling foe, and another man down! "Shrugged your shoulders, called me a coward, did you? *Gott!* I'm saving your life, that's what! Fighting them twenty to one!" Thud, thud!

A bullet tore through his forage cap. The blood in his eyes was blinding him. But what of it? He could still swing his gun, and he was showing his cousin, Fritz von Pau, favorite of that hag, fortune, *verdammt!* Showing him! That's what he was doing. And he had not yielded a foot —an inch! He was giving it to them —the devils—though his life-blood spurted from a dozen wounds. He was fighting on his knees now, drunk with the lust to kill—kill—while Fritz von Pau was alive to see. He was showing Fritz at last, fighting eye to eye with the black fiends that surrounded him. What did he care that the rest of the detachment had

retreated with the enemy hot at its heels? He was showing Fritz von Pau! Single-handed he was holding back a dozen beasts of hell!

His senses reeled. His head fell forward on his neck. They'd cut him to bits. Swarm over him. He no longer cared. He had shown Fritz. Sneered had he, and shrugged his shoulders? Strange vengeance this. His life the price. He gloried in it. For he had shown Fritz von Pau, *verflucht!* shown him at last!

Adolf Streichen opened his eyes. Somebody was holding water to his lips—and those black devils—where had they gone? Away in the distance there was the sound of cannonading but here among the trees where a moment before he had faced those—

Only he wasn't among the trees. He was no longer on the ground with Fritz von Pau under him. There were blankets and a pillow and—What was the chill thing under his fingers?

With an effort he lifted it. "The iron cross!" His voice rang out in a piercing cry: "Fritz von Pau's iron cross!"

How did it happen to be there in his fingers?

From what seemed to be a great distance away, he heard Fritz von Pau, speaking.

"It's yours, Adolf, to be buried with you!"

Another voice murmured something that sounded like, "Greater love hath no man—"

Love! How strange the word sounded. He wished he had the strength to tell them it was not love but hate. But he was too tired. His eyes were heavy. It was very hard to breathe. But the sore spot in his heart was no longer there. For the first time since he could remember, he would go to sleep with no torment of envy in his soul. He caught his breath. His fingers closed convulsively over the iron cross.

They drew the blanket up over his face. The gray of the sky warmed to golden and rose. Day had broken.

The Man From Home

BY K. EDWARD HARRISON

Memory stretches her arm across a continent and saves the life of a woman's mate.

Brr—rr—rr—rip! the telephone rang noisily. "Shanghai" Brown laid aside the glass he had been polishing and ponderously approached the instrument.

"Well?"

"Golden Gate; eight o'clock; Spike—big haul."

"Good!"

"Shanghai" hung up the receiver; gazed abstractedly for several moments at the opposite wall; then walked behind the bar and slowly bent beneath its large mahogany surface. A few stifled grunts and he emerged again to view, puffing and blowing, a prototype of a large overfed porpoise, bearing in his hand the object of his quest—a gaudy pasteboard placard.

Pausing to laboriously remove the beads of perspiration from his shining forehead and blue-veined jowls, he waddled to the show window, pushed aside the green curtain forming a background to the array of whiskey bottles, and carefully placed the card in the centre of the exhibit; a most innocent action, apparently having but one significance—that Bender's dark ale was on draught within.

The buxom young lady displayed on the placard, had smiled invitingly to all passers-by for over an hour before encountering the careless, bulldog glance of a tall athletic young man who, after a second reassuring glance, immediately changed an aimless gait to a brisk walk.

Turning swiftly into an adjoining alley, he circled the block and paused before a small door in the rear of the saloon; took a hasty survey of the deserted street and quickly entered.

"Lock that door."

He shot the rusty bolt and turned in the direction of the gruff voice, dimly discerning the corpulent figure of Brown seated by a table in an obscure corner.

"Got your signal, 'Shang'; what's on?"

"Shanghai's" small pig-like eyes glistened under their thick lids.

"A big night's work for you, 'Spike,' my boy. Bascomb has a husky in tow and you will meet them at the Golden Gate at eight o'clock. He is a stranger and packs a horse choking roll. Give him the dope or sack, but get him—quietly. Riggs will be waiting at coal dock number six. Slip him for a quiet cruise on Fritz Brunner's whaler, the Morning Star."

Mr. William Ryan, better known to the denizens of the San Francisco water front as "Spike," looked closely

into the face of his chief.

"How much do I get?" he said tersely.

"Fifty and a fourth of the roll—there are only four of us," added Brown.

Ryan rose abruptly, his six feet of bone and muscle towering in strange contrast to the squat heavy figure before him.

"You're on!" he said briefly.

The bell in the distant tower of St. Mary's was faintly completing its eighth reverberating stroke as "Spike" Ryan, resplendent in a checked suit and flashing tie, strode through the swinging portals of the Golden Gate Café, and easily shouldered his way through the swarms of lesser humanity, until he reached the desired point of vantage—the cigar counter.

Carefully selecting a cigar of the quality superior to those usually enjoyed, he leisurely surveyed his surroundings, quickly noting the fiery shock-head of the heavy-set Bascomb seated with a companion near the main entrance.

Lighting his cigar with great deliberation, he paused a few moments before the baseball score board and then slowly passed toward the entrance; turning in well-simulated surprise as a voice at his elbow exclaimed:

"It's Bill Ryan or his ghost!"

"Why—hello, Bascomb! I haven't seen you for a year."

And the two worthies clasped hands in a manner that brought a sympathetic smile to the bronzed face of the tall young man standing awkwardly with both hands resting on the back of his chair.

"Beg pardon," continued Bascomb glibly; "I wish to present my friend Mr. Ryan—Mr. Mason.

"You see," said Bascomb as they drew their chairs to a small table, "I was just telling Mason that the West was a good place to stick around if he has a roll big enough to hold him over for a month or two, and here you come—a living example of the East prospering over us poor Westerners!"

"Are you from the East?" ventured Mason, turning to his new acquaintance.

"He sure is," broke in the loquacious Bascomb, "from New York, and if he won't say so himself, he will soon be going back to the home folks in his own private car," and Bascomb laughed noisily.

"What part of the East do you hail from?" interrupted "Spike," hastily diverting the conversation from himself.

Mason colored.

"I'm afraid you have not heard of the place. I'm from Wescott, Maryland,—they haven't even trolley cars there, but after four years in Alaska, it surely looks good to me. I believe I saw about a dozen white faces a year up there," he ended simply.

"Wescott," muttered Ryan strangely, "you're from Wescott?"

"Why, yes," said Mason, eagerly noting the change of expression in the other's face; "ever been there?"

Bascomb shot a wondering look at his usually taciturn companion.

"No," answered Ryan vaguely. "I once knew a fellow from there a long time ago by the name of Thompson—I forgot his first name—and it just

came to my mind when you spoke."

"Thompson," echoed Mason, "that's funny; why I know the family well—that is, all except Bert. He left home when I was a kid and they've never heard from him since. I wish you could tell me something about him."

"Spike" shook his head.

"We never ask questions of men out here and all he mentioned about himself was Wescott and for some reason the name stuck in my memory."

Mason hesitated.

"You see," he continued shyly, "that's why I am so anxious to get home. Dorothy—that is, Bert's sister, and I, are going to be married when I arrive. Think of it! Going home after four long years of hell in a frozen country—no one to talk to; little to eat and never knowing which day would be the last, until finally I struck it—struck it rich—and I never could have done it if the thought of that little girl waiting at home had not kept me up."

The young man suddenly became aware of his unconscious outburst and paused.

"Excuse this drivel, gentlemen, but I feel like a kid out of school. Do you blame me?" With a quick movement he produced a tiny locket and snapped the catch.

"That's Dorothy," he added softly.

"She's a peach, all right," clumsily complimented Bascomb, oblivious to the trembling of the hand that Ryan extended for the trinket.

"You are a lucky man," huskily remarked "Spike," catching the warning glance of Bascomb; for precious time was passing and Riggs with the yawl was even at this moment waiting impatiently amid the shadows of the coal wharf.

"You understand," apologetically explained Mason in declining Bascomb's third pressing offer of a drink, "that's why I've cut out the tanglefoot and am off on the ten-forty, in spite of the hospitality of you all."

"We know how you feel, son," said Bascomb genially as they rose, "and," he continued, consulting an ornately engraved watch, "we will see you off, if you have no objections."

And Mason, a friendly warmth permeating his being, followed his hospitable hosts through the swinging doors.

What the plan of concerted action would be in quietly disposing of the credulous stripling, was understood only too well by "Shanghai's" emissaries, as the trio, arm-in-arm, swung from the main thoroughfare into a narrow by-way that Bascomb easily termed a "short-cut."

The street became darker as they progressed; the conversation of the talkative Bascomb never lagging as imperceptibly he dropped slightly to the rear—inch by inch, his right hand now resting easily on the venomous blackjack reposing in the pocket of his coat.

The dimly lighted street crossing loomed weirdly ahead—there only two could pass abreast. Ryan unconsciously tightened his hold on the victim's arm as Bascomb abruptly fell behind.

"Run for that light ahead—station—six blocks to right," grated "Spike," shouldering the astonished Mason from the walk, catching as he whirled

on his heel, the leaden smash of the hissing blackjack full upon his upraised arm.

Surprise, utter b e w i l d e r m e n t, changing to savage hate, flashed over the liniaments of Bascomb's working face as Ryan, with the agility of a tiger, flung himself fiercely upon his partner, crushing the burly figure to the earth, his lithe fingers working their way into the thick neck—choking relentlessly.

Standing numbly apart, feeling more than seeing, the forms of his late companions silently writhing and straining in the darkness, Mason stared dazedly.

"Run—you fool," hissed Ryan through clenched teeth, ever tightening the iron grip on his adversary's throat.

The young man lingered—fascinated.

"For—for—Dorothy's sake—run!" gasped "Spike."

And Mason ran, his footsteps echoing and re-echoing down the empty street—growing fainter and fainter, until lost in the darkness.

Ryan held the tense form beneath him until he saw a shadowy figure pass rapidly beneath the distant light—to safety, and then rose unsteadily.

"You — you — d—— w e l c h e r," snarled Bascomb heavily, his bloodshot eyes expressing unutterable contempt and passion. "He's gone!"

"Yes," mused Ryan, gazing pensively at the distant light and apparently oblivious of the other's presence; "he's gone—home—to little Dot."

Bascomb drunkenly staggered to his feet. "But why—why—the double-cross? You—you—" the hoarse query ended in a gutteral rattle.

"Spike" drew his handkerchief and carefully wiped the blood from his checked sleeve.

"I'm—Thompson," he said quietly.

no jurisdiction to try him for crimes committed in Maine. If it is necessary to cite any authority for this proposition I would call your Honor's attention to the case of Rex *vs.* Coombs reported in Leach's Criminal Cases, page 432, where a person on the high seas was killed by a shot fired by a person on the shore, and the English Courts held that the crime was committed on the high seas and therefore within the admiralty jurisdiction. The same principle was laid down by the United States Courts in the case of U. S. *vs.* Davis, decided by the Circuit Court in 1837, where a master of an American ship, lying in a harbor of one of the Society Islands, shot and killed a man in another vessel lying alongside, and Judge Story held that the offense was committed, not on board the American ship, but on board the foreign vessel, and that the defendant was consequently triable by the laws of the place where the crime was committed and not according to the laws of the United States."

"Have you anything to say, Mr. Attorney General, upon the point?" asked the Judge.

"The cases which my learned friend cites are quite apt," replied the Attorney General, "and I would be forced to admit that they would apply unless the fact that Brown, who is a Canadian, took charge of the money according to the prisoner's instructions."

"I cannot see that that makes any difference," said the Judge, "as everything that Brown did was also done on the United States side of the line and the same objection would apply. I would therefore direct a verdict of acquittal."

And the jury so found.

"I might suggest, Mr. Attorney General," said the Judge, after discharging the prisoner, "that it might be advisable for your department to look into the question as to whether it would not be possible to prosecute Brown for bringing stolen money into Canada."

"I have already considered that," replied the Attorney General, "and it would appear that Brown took the stolen money from the American side of the bar and exchanged it for Canadian money at Houlton, so that the money which he brought into Canada would not be stolen money, and there would appear to be no prospect of proceeding in that way."

Emery's respite was short. The American government promptly took up the matter, employed a leading New Brunswick lawyer, and took proceedings under the Extradition Act and Treaties to have Emery sent to the United States for trial. Emery was arrested and the usual hearing held before a New Brunswick Judge. A United States District Attorney and the New Brunswick lawyer conducted the case for the prosecution, and gave practically the same evidence as at the former trial.

"Have you anything to say, Mr. Logan?" asked the Judge, when the prosecution had closed their case.

"Nothing," replied Logan, "except this: that under the Extradition Act, Your Honor has no jurisdiction to issue a warrant, and that the prisoner

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 52]

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must be discharged."

"On what grounds?" inquired the Judge, and the eminent counsel smiled at each other.

"My ground is very shortly stated," replied Logan, "and is simply this: The Extradition Act provides that any person who shall commit certain crimes in the United States and 'flee into Canada' may be sent back to the United States for trial under certain conditions. We admit that a crime was committed in the United States and that it is covered by the Extradition Act, but all the evidence shows that the prisoner was never in the United States, but everything that he did was done in Canada; therefore, the prisoner is not 'fleeing into Canada,' within the meaning of the Act, and there is no jurisdiction to order his return to the United States. I need not quote a dictionary, or go into any extended argument to prove that as the prisoner has always stayed in New Brunswick, he could not possibly 'flee' into that Province and that, therefore, the Act does not apply."

"The point is certainly a novel one," said the Judge, "but it is well taken and the prisoner will therefore be discharged."

"But the prisoner has already been tried in this Province," broke in the District Attorney, "for this same crime and was acquitted on the ground that the crime was committed in the United States and not in Canada."

"That is very true," remarked the Judge.

"And now you refuse to send the prisoner back to the United States to be tried for a crime committed there?"

"That is my decision," said the Judge. "I certainly have no authority to do so under the Act, and all I am to do is simply to administer the law as I find it."

"Then if that is correct," declared the New Brunswick counsel, "that is a grave miscarriage of justice."

"On the other hand," remarked Logan, genially, "I consider it a striking example of the triumph of ideal justice."

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father's arm so roughly that the old man winced with pain. "Take that back before I forget that—"

A knock at the door brought him to his senses. He dropped his father's arm and stepped back to the other side of the desk.

In obedience to the old man's command, a secretary entered the room and placed a small hand satchel on the desk.

"There it is, sir," he said.

"All right. That will be all."

As the door closed behind the clerk, the old gentleman tipped forward in his chair and drew the satchel toward him. With trembling hands he opened it and took out a large roll of bills. Billy's eyes glistened.

"Five hundred, did you say?" queried his father, his eyes on the bills.

"Yes, sir."

Deliberately, the old man counted out five hundred dollars.

"Just what you wanted?" he questioned again.

"Yes, sir," replied Billy huskily, deeply moved now that relief was in sight.

Slowly his father counted out another pile of bills, and then another, until four piles lay in front of him.

"Four times what you wanted?" he asked, not looking up.

"Yes, sir," whispered Billy, staggered at the possibility of having so much money again.

Without a word his father piled the bundles on top of one another, stepped quickly to the safe, opened the door, placed the bills inside and twirled the lock.

As silently he stepped back to his desk and pressed the buzzer.

"Show this young man out!" was his stern command to the secretary, who answered his call.

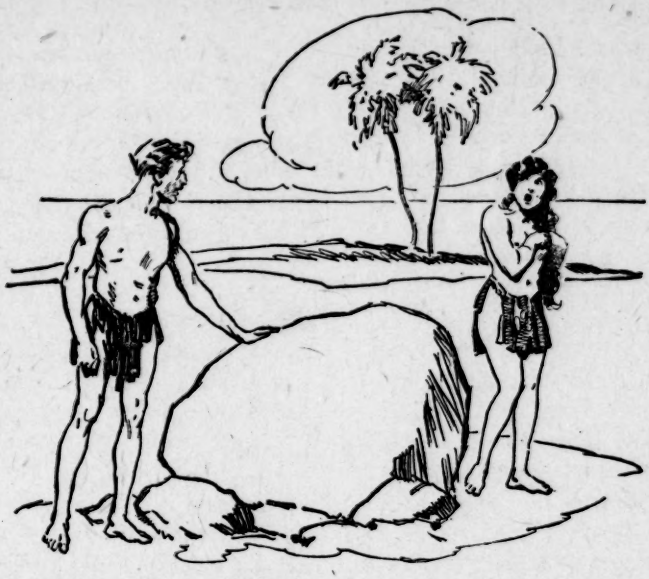
Out in the retired spot in the park where Billy crawled like a whipped dog, he went over it all until his brain and heart were on fire with bitter hatred. His father's injustice from the first—Katherine's threatening illness—the risk to the baby—the diabolical torture inflicted in the office—he lived it all over. His anger when the loan was refused—the kindling hope at the sight of the bills—hope made certainty as his father counted out the money—the despair when the safe shut the bills from his sight!

He gasped, so suddenly had the recollection come and the resolution been made. He still had a key to his father's office and the combination to the safe. His purpose was born full grown, but he spent hours going over every detail, guarding against the possibility of failure or detection. By the time he started for home, he had his work mapped out for the night.

He was glad to find Katherine out when he reached home, for he felt confident that her watchful eyes would detect something wrong. He got out his key, laid out the clothes he would wear, and waited impatiently for night.

"Oh, Billy! Billy!" cried his wife, bursting suddenly into the room, wild with excitement, "we're rich, rich!" Almost dropping the baby on the floor, she thrust into his hands a roll of bills and clung to him, laughing, crying, and trying to talk at the same time.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 56]



Neither ever saw a human being before!

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"Baby won it, Billy!" she exulted. "You won't be angry with me, will you, Billy?" she coaxed, putting up her lips for a kiss. "I entered her under my maiden name, so it wouldn't disgrace your horrid old family tree. Think of it, Billy! Five hundred dollars and the sweepstakes prize—the best baby exhibited! And he was the de-e-earest old man."

"What are you talking about, Katherine?" interrupted Billy, trying to get his bearings. "Who's a dear old man, and what—"

"The man that gave the prizes, goosie,—the one that backed the "Better-Baby Contest." He paid me the money with his own hands, and seemed just as proud of baby as if she had been his own granddaughter. He was deeply touched when I spoke of baby's name being Mary and that she was named for her grandmother. He told me that his wife's name was Mary and that she died years ago, leaving him only one son. I think there must have been something awfully sad in his life, for he cried softly when he told me about his only son. He's anxious to meet you, for he said the father of such a baby must be all right. He's going to call right away—tonight. He wanted to bring me home in his taxi, but I wouldn't let him do that. I wanted to see you first."

"I wonder if that can be he now," she cried, a few minutes later, as they heard an auto stop before their door.

"It is," she exclaimed happily, returning from opening the door, followed by an elderly man.

Stupidly the visitor stared at Billy. Stupidly Billy stared back.

"Father!" gasped Billy.

"Billy!" cried William, Sr.

"Da-da," crowed the prize baby.

"I tell you, Billy," boasted William, Sr., holding aloft his granddaughter proudly, "blood 'll tell."

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deck, Ruth took possession of him. She was radiant and showed such a marked personal interest in him that, to conceal my disgust, I took myself off to another part of the boat.

Of course the Duke was lionized for the rest of that week, and I was certain I detected a strut in his walk, which he did not have when he first came. Also, he assumed an attitude of confidant proprietorship toward Ruth, and I avoided them as much as possible, to hide my growing antipathy for him.

At the end of the second week, there became rampant at the club, a rumor that Ruth and he were engaged and that the date for the wedding was to be set in the near future. Then, to cap the climax, as it were, the Treats invited me down for a few days, and the invitation was couched in such terms that I could not refuse.

When I reached the Laurels, I saw that the gossips had not erred; Ruth and the Duke were as devoted as a pair of doves. He trailed her round so closely that he gave me not one moment alone with her.

Several affairs, a dance, a picnic and a clam-bake, had been arranged, and I joined in the fun with a will, if without heart, and believed I concealed my feelings quite well. I was hurt deeply, but I said nothing of it.

The afternoon of my arrival, the Duke gave a private exhibition of his swimming and his performance was truly wonderful. As before, he wore the black suit with the hood, and when asked why, replied that he had found black to be the color best adapted to swimming, and that the hood held in place his hair, which was long and heavy and would otherwise annoy him.

He went through a maze of intricate movements, performing with ease every feat I had ever heard of being done by swimmers before. With watch in hand, I timed one of his underwater swims, and I gasped with astonishment when he stayed under a full four minutes. It was marvelous, staggering to the imagination.

Out on the lawn that evening, he entertained us with stories. He was a born narrator, and when he talked, everyone within sound of his smooth, silky voice, felt the power of his personality and hung on his words in thrilled silence.

There was one tale he told that deeply impressed us all. It was about a superstitious belief current among the Islands that when a child is born on the water it oftimes takes on the ways of a fish, sometimes even to the extreme of being deformed with webbed fingers and toes and like peculiarities. So strong is the native's faith in this tradition, the Duke declared, that, to appease the wrath of the God of Storms, they often return to the waves, a child born on them. He said he was positive he was born at sea, as he was so much at home in the water, and in conclusion laughingly raised his hands to show that he was "not webbed."

I could not stay near and see Ruth throw herself at this brown man, charming though I had to admit he was, so I strode down on to the beach to be alone with my thoughts, resolved to return to the city on the twelve-

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 60]

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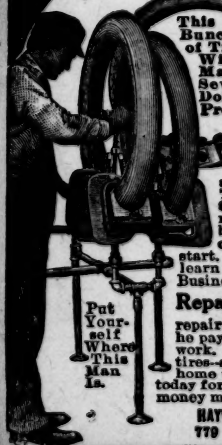

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o'clock boat that very night.

It was eleven o'clock when I returned to the house. Everyone seemed to have retired, so I slipped round to the rear.

Owing to its having been built on the edge of a bluff overlooking the Sound, in the rear, the second story of the house was the ground floor, the veranda, which the library and several bedrooms faced, extending across the back.

I stepped into the library to get my bag and there found Treat waiting up for me. Without explaining why, I said I was going and he gripped my shoulder in such a fatherly manner that I gulped. I realized then that he understood how things were with me, and though he said nothing, I knew that he favored me rather than the Duke for a son-in-law. His hands were tied, however, for Ruth was a girl of strong will and used to having her own way.

He paused in the library door and followed me with gloomy eyes as, too overcome with my emotions to speak, I turned down the moonlit porch. I know I walked like a man in a trance, for I was stunned; all the joy seemed to have been blotted out of my life.

I had gotten half way to the steps, when a reflection of the moon in a window as I passed, suddenly broke in upon my reflections and made me pause. The curtain had fallen away from the window, and as I peered into the room, I recognized it as the bathroom of the Duke's suite.

Feeling guiltily like a peeping Tom, I was about to pass on, when my eye fell on the bathtub, which was close to the window.

I started violently.

The tub was plainly revealed, and I noticed that it was full of water. Peering closer, I saw myriad bubbles rising at one end, and, as one fascinated, I watched them.

Slowly, the outlines of a form in the water below revealed themselves. I caught my breath, and, for a moment, my heart stopped beating, while my hair rose on end. I shuddered.

In the tub, with all but his feet submerged, lay the Duke, and the toes that stuck up were covered with short, silky gray fur and joined to one another by a film-like skin similar to the webs of a duck's foot.

Drawn as by a magnet, my eyes followed the obscure lines of the body till they came to his neck. Then, suddenly, my knees went weak and, with eyes sticking out and jaw sagging, I leaned against the window and stared.

Both sides of the Duke's neck, from his collarbones to a point an inch below his ears, were opening and closing with the regularity of his breathing; and each time the muscles expanded, a thick, dark-red fringe appeared in each of the openings, while a large bubble and many smaller ones streamed from his lips and rose to the surface.

I understood then why the Duke was "so much at home in the water" —*he had gills like a fish!*

My bag fell from my nerveless fingers, and with a hand pressed to my throat in an endeavor to hold back the screech of laughter that struggled for expression, I turned, wide-eyed with terror, and staggered back to where Treat still leaned against the library door.

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A Matter of Business

BY ROSS ELLIS

This is a story of a crooked fight that was "fixed" for the third round, but there was no third round, because one of the fighters—what's the use; read "The Hammer's" explanation why there was no third round.

NILS Bergstrom, known to Pacific Coast ring followers as "The Hammer," was pounding the punching bag in Abie Chone's gymnasium. His mild blue eyes were alight, a blissful smile beamed on his rather bovine countenance, and his long arms shot back and forth with the ease of an engine's pistons.

"The Hammer's" fistic career, though short, had been spectacular. Less than a year before, still wearing the clothes in which he had crossed the ocean, he had presented himself at Chone's gymnasium and announced his willingness to do aught that would insure a place to sleep and a reasonable number of meals *per diem*.

It chanced that Blinky Cassidy, the most promising 133-pounder in Chone's string of fighters, was in need of a sparring partner, and the husky little Scandinavian was promptly engaged. He at once demonstrated a serene indifference to any punishment that the redoubtable Blinky could inflict and soon developed an uncanny ability to deliver blows of pulverizing quality with either hand from almost any position.

First securing Bergstrom's signature to a contract that bound the fighter firmly and his manager not at all, the astute Abie Chone cautiously introduced him into the four-round preliminary bouts. Through these, the Norseman went like a whirlwind, losing not a single decision and winning by the knockout route whenever an opponent could be induced to stand up and trade punches. Passing on to the main-event class, he won his first battle with consummate ease and established himself high in the affections of a large percentage of the Coast sporting fraternity.

Now he was matched with "Terrible Terry" Dugan, who had once fought the champion to a ten-round draw. Though Dugan's championship aspirations had been drowned in a shallow cup, he was still a great drawing-card and accounted one of the toughest customers in the 133-pound division. Many of the newspaper experts had expressed their conviction that "The Hammer's" triumphal advance was due to be rudely checked.

and Abie Chone was much inclined to doubt his wisdom in making the match. The little Norseman, however, was as free from doubts and fears as a game chicken.

Observing that his manager had entered the room, Nils cut loose with a mighty blow that tore the bag from its moorings and hurled it against the opposite wall.

"So shall Ay do to dees Dugan faller tomorrow night," he promised with a toothful grin. "Ay shall bust him vide open."

"It gets you nothing to bust up the furniture," observed Abie Chone reprovingly. "Come here. I've got a story to tell you."

He led the way into the back room, furnished with a battered roll-top desk and a few chairs, which did duty as an office. Bergstrom leaped from the platform and padded after his manager with the unhesitating obedience of a well-trained dog.

"Vall, Meester Chone?" he questioned, standing respectfully beside the desk before which the other had seated himself.

"Nils," said the little man with the shrewd black eyes and the shoe-brush moustache, "I've just been talking to Dave Triner, Dugan's manager."

"Yaas, Meester Chone."

"We've fixed up a little business deal for tomorrow night. You don't lick Dugan. He licks you."

He whom an enthusiastic reporter had referred to as "The Hammer of Thor," stared at his manager in wounded surprise.

"He ent able," he protested. "Maybe he bane a purty tough faller, but Ay tenk—"

"Thinking ain't good enough," interrupted Chone, leaning forward and shaking a stubby forefinger under the other's nose. "I want to *know,* and so does Triner. If Dugan was an odds-on favorite in the betting, like he ought to be, we'd fix it the other way. But he ain't. You've won many a fight here, Nils, and the local boys have turned loose a flood of money. I want some of that dough, and I'm looking to you to bring it home. Get me?"

Nils Bergstrom nodded sagely. "You vant Ay shall carry home for you the money you vin when Ay lick dees Dugan," he said placidly. "Ay shall bring a satchel."

Abie threw up his hands in a gesture of despair.

"Deliver me from explaining anything to a Swede!" he complained to the office cat. "I tell you, Nils, you *don't* lick Dugan. You don't *try* to lick him. The deal is all fixed up. Now listen:

"For the first two rounds, you tear into him like you was going to eat him alive—just like you always fight, and like the fans will expect you to. In the third, he'll stall as if he was tired and stagger up against the ropes. When you hear me yell, 'Get him, Nils,' you are to jump at him wide open—and Dugan will do the rest. There's an extra hundred in it for you. *Now* do you get me?"

"The Hammer's" round blue eyes were reproachful. "You—you vant Ay shall *let* him lick me?" he questioned, unbelievingly.

"That's the idea. You follow me, Nils, and you'll be a rich man one of these days. Dugan will give us an-

other fight later, and you can flatten him then if you've got the goods. But this time you lose in the third round. Understand?"

There was much grief, but no thought of rebellion in the fighter's simple mind.

"Ay understand," he said heavily,—"in the third round."

It was a sore-hearted pugilist who, half an hour later, left the gymnasium and strode moodily down the street. The moral considerations involved in a "fixed" fight troubled him little; but to one who has begun to cherish vague dreams of a lightweight championship, the prospect of an undeserved "K. O." on his record is not a pleasant one.

In this crisis, "The Hammer's" fancy lightly turned to thoughts of food. Blessed by Nature with a body whose normal weight was pounds below the lightweight limit, he was accustomed to eat what and when he pleased, which was much and often. A square meal brought to Nils the same surcease of sorrow that Mr. Poe sought vainly in his books.

Into McCann's restaurant he turned with a vicious swing that jarred to buzzing activity the swarm of flies that clung to the screen door. He took his accustomed place at one of the tables presided over by pretty Nellie Parsons, for whom he had long nursed a hopeless passion that expressed itself in sidelong glances and stammering comments on the weather.

At sight of him, that popular young person's naturally high color took on an even brighter tint, and she surreptitiously studied her reflection in the long mirror which lined the wall. Reassured as to the arrangement of her coiffure and the impeccability of her neat uniform, she placed before Nils a clean menu-card and bent over him with a hint of more than professional solicitude.

"How's tricks, Mr. Bergstrom?" she questioned pertly. "You look sorta down in the mouth."

"The Hammer's" gloomy expression disappeared in a wide and tender smile. Tomorrow's troubles were forgotten in the joys of today. Never before had his divinity seemed so approachable.

"Mees Nellie," he said with laborious gallantry, "*you* are the purtiest leetle trick in *dees* town."

"Listen to the man!" laughed Nellie. "Why, Mister Bergstrom, I actually believe you're trying to flirt with me. You men are all alike. You lead us poor girls on and then make fools of us."

"Ay ent fooling," said Nils seriously. "Ay bane loving you dees long time—ever since first Ay seen you. Ay ent no trifler, Mees Nellie."

"My, you are a speedy man when you get started!" ejaculated the pretty little waitress. Then her black eyes grew languorous.

"Do you really mean all that—Nils?" she asked softly. "This is about the first time you ever spoke to me straight out, you know."

"Mees Nellie," said Nils earnestly, "Ay ent dared. Ay bane loving you, but Ay ent dared tell you. But Ay am wanting to marry you, Mees Nellie. Ay make money fast, now. Some day Ay will be champion. So soon as Ay lick dees faller, Dugan, Ay shall—"

A wave of shameful memory swept over "The Hammer's" brain, and he stopped short, his fair skin brick-red.

Nellie Parsons leaned forward, her eyes alight with enthusiasm.

"I believe you, Nils," she breathed in his ear, "and if you want to know how strong you are with me, just listen to this. Yesterday I drew out every cent I had in the savings-bank—three hundred perfectly good dollars, all I've saved in four years of hard work—and Dad took it down to the pool-room last night and bet it all on you at even money. So when you go up against Dugan tomorrow night, you can feel that you are fighting for me, too."

Nils Bergstrom's flushed face turned a ghastly gray. He stared at the girl in wild-eyed horror.

"You—bet—your—money—on—me?" he gasped.

"Sure I did. Why, Nils, you'll lick that old 'has-been' easy. You ought to get him by the third round."

"The third round!" he echoed bitterly.

"Of course," she said with calm confidence. "And now give me your order, 'cause the boss is watching us pretty hard. What are you going to have?"

"The Hammer" pushed back his chair and got unsteadily to his feet.

"Excuse, Mees Nellie," he faltered brokenly. "Ay guess—Ay guess Ay ent hungry." And before she could recover from her surprise, he had seized his hat and hurried out of the restaurant.

He sped straight back to the gymnasium, whence, by a lucky chance, Abie Chone had not yet departed. Nils burst into his manager's office like a Scandinavian whirlwind.

"Meester Chone," he shrilled excitedly, "it ent right. Fallers in dees town bet on me, and Ay ought to fight yust so gude as Ay can. They lose their money if Dugan licks me. It ent right, Ay tell you!"

"Now listen to me, Nils," said Abie Chone with infinite calm, "and I'll tell *you* something you can paste in your hat and remember as long as you live. In the fighting game, like everything else, you've got to be a business man. The right thing to do is the thing that gets you the most money—always, all the time. These guys ain't betting on you because they love you. They've got a fool notion that because you haven't been licked yet, you ain't never going to be. That's all. They're following their 'material interest,' as the I. W. W. orators say. Well, it's to *my* material interest for you to be licked this time. And licked you're certainly going to be."

Nils sighed.

"How mooch money do I get for being licked?" he asked submissively.

"You get two hundred—win, lose or draw; and a hundred more out of what I clean up in the betting. That's three hundred iron men for sparring seven minutes and taking a punch in the jaw in the third round. Pretty soft money, if you ask *me*."

"Vall, just as you say, Meester Chone," agreed Nils humbly. Yet a close observer might have identified the glint in his round blue eyes as the light of a dawning idea.

The same mythical observer, had he followed the pugilist to his modest sleeping quarters on the floor above

the gymnasium, would have seen him bring forth from an ancient steamer trunk a writing tablet and a stubby pencil and proceed to wrinkle his smooth brow over a mighty problem in mathematics.

At ten o'clock of the following night, Nils Bergstrom crawled through the ropes in Micklebaum's Pavilion, grinning at the crowd like a Norse cherub. Almost immediately, on the other side of the ring, appeared the formidable figure of Dugan, closely followed by his manager who, even in the terrible one's decline, still found him an invaluable meal-ticket.

The announcer led Nils about the ring.

"Nils Bergstrom," he yelled, "the battling Swede, better known as 'The Hammer.' The undefeated pride of Chone's athletic club. The boy who wins his fights in a punch."

The crowd shouted its approval, and "The Hammer's" grin widened.

Dugan was led forward.

"This handsome young man," continued the man with the bull-like voice, "is Terrence O'Brien Dugan; known to all the world as 'Terrible Terry.' Winner of fifty fierce fights and as game as they make 'em. He will now attempt to hammer 'The Hammer.'"

"It's perfectly safe," jeered Dugan. "The ads. all say so."

"Look out for de explosion," came a voice from the dollar seats.

Nils smiled on as one who dreams pleasant dreams. He was still smiling when the bell rang. It was with that same blissful expression that he drove his right glove into Dugan's mid-section with such spirit as to cause that doughty person to emit a pained grunt and hang on desperately. Nils tore himself free with ripping body blows, measured his distance, and cut loose a mighty swing for the jaw—which missed by a fraction of an inch. "Terrible Terry" met him with a whirlwind return, and the round ended with the two slugging merrily away in the middle of the ring, and the crowd on its feet yelling like madmen.

"Fine, Nils, fine!" whispered Abie Chone, as he leaned over "The Hammer's" chair and proffered the water bottle. "You're a regular John Drew. I didn't think you had it in you. Just keep that up for one more round, and then—"

"Ay keep him oop," grunted Nils, dabbing delicately at an eye on which Dugan's glove had landed.

In the other corner, Terrence Dugan favored Dave Triner with a reproachful glare. "What's this Swede tryin' to do?" he demanded earnestly, though furtively. "I thought you had him fixed to drop to me."

"So he is—in the third round," breathed the guardian of his fortunes.

"That's a long way off," said Dugan. "He dam near broke me in two with that right of his. I'll murder him for that."

"Aw, he's just making it look good," whispered Triner.

"It don't look good to me, nor feel good neither," complained Dugan bitterly. "I'm going to slow him up a bit. He gets his, this round."

At the tap of the bell, Dugan was half-way across the ring before the more phlegmatic Norseman had left his chair. They met almost in "The

Hammer's" corner, with a mighty crash of thudding gloves and heaving bodies. "Terrible Terry" was giving Nils the full benefit of the annihilating attack which had carried him far on the road toward the lightweight crown, and which probably would have sufficed for the whole journey, had it been backed by rigorous training and the stamina which is the reward of good clean living.

Blocking what he could and philosophically absorbing the remainder, Nils lived through a cyclonic minute. Then it became apparent to all that the Swede had weathered the storm and was in turn the aggressor.

Half a minute later, Terry reeled back from a terrific smash over the heart and dived desperately into a clinch, his knees bending under him, his body sagging weakly, while "The Hammer" continued to belabor him with overhand wallops to the kidneys.

"Eat him up, Bergstrom!" yelled his backers in the crowd.

"Careful, you fool!" yelled Abie Chone hoarsely, forgetting caution in his desperation.

"Stay away from him, Terry!" implored Triner. "Box him clever!"

Terrence Dugan made a noble effort to obey the voice of authority. He slipped from the clinch to the accompaniment of a swarm of rights and lefts, and backed away on unsteady legs, his gloves waving before his face, his elbows drawn in to protect his battered body.

The Norseman was after him like a flash.

"Stop it, Nils! Stop it!" wailed Abie Chone, dancing up and down in a vain effort to attract his protégé's attention.

It would have been as easy to stop a famished porker on his way to a particularly well-filled trough. Out darted "The Hammer's" left glove in a disconcerting feint, and up from the neighborhood of the floor came his right, in an uppercut that tore through Dugan's ineffectual guard and landed flush on the point of his jaw.

Then the referee began to count. He stopped at "ten," but he might have continued up to ten thousand without in the least disturbing Mr. Dugan.

With such grace as he could muster, Abie Chone accepted the congratulations of the reporters and friends who crowded into the dressing room. To the blissfully smiling Nils Bergstrom, he said nothing until he had him locked in the office of the gymnasium in company with the grim-faced Dave Triner.

"Now, you dirty, ungrateful pup," he roared, "what's the idea? Who's been paying you to double-cross me?"

"Don't overdo it, Chone," sneered Triner. "You might as well can the Faversham stuff. You're in on this thing, too."

"In it?" shrieked Abie, thrusting a bunch of pink slips into the doubter's hands. "Look at my tickets. I got two thousand bet on Dugan to lick this boob—and then you say I'm in on the double-cross! In? I'm all in —that's what I am. Bergstrom, what you got to say for yourself?"

"Ay ent double-cross nobody," said Nils in a surprised tone, turning his

one undamaged optic first on his irate manager and then on the apoplectic Triner.

"Didn't—"choked Triner. "Didn't you understand that the fight was fixed for Dugan—that you was to lay down to him in the third round?"

"But, Meester Triner," protested Nils innocently, "there *ent* no third round."

"Aw, the Swede's a fool!" snorted Triner in disgust. "Let him go, Chone. He don't know any better."

"Yes, just a plain fool," agreed Abie sorrowfully, as he unlocked the door. "He does all his thinking with his hands. Go on up to bed, Nils. You simply ain't got sense enough to be a business man."

But their opinion of "The Hammer's" acumen might have been altered, had they seen the sheet of paper at which he glanced complacently before seeking his well-earned rest. It bore the result of his calculations of the night before; it read thus:

FOR WINING

Mi bit	$200.00
Mis Nelys mony	300.00
Wat she win on bet	300.00
	$800.00

FOR LOOSING

Mi bit	$200.00
Wat Mr. Chone pay me	100.00
	$300.00

Wining better as loosing $500.00

"Ay tenk," murmured Nils dreamily, "Ay tenk—Ay—bane—purty—*gude*—beesiness man!"

Attar of Roses

BY THOMAS FAY WALSH

Facing death, a man plans the last final penalty for an uncle who had wronged him.

LIKE the roof of Hades, the Plaza radiated heat long after the sun had set. If it were any cooler than the hotel, it was imperceptible; but, at least, there were fellow heat-sufferers, and man can suffer more patiently in company. Chairs scraped, glasses clinked, voices rose and fell. I wandered from café to café, seeking a table or a vacant seat. The outside tables were crowded; to go inside was unthinkable and useless, as every chair was doing duty. Finally, I reached the last, and, because it was near the water's edge and a faint zephyr stirred the air, the crowd seemed thickest.

"If the Senor will but wait a minute, a chair will soon be vacant," assured the proprietor.

But as that was the fourth time I had heard that in twenty minutes, I turned away disgusted, and bumped into a white-clad figure, carrying a portable table and a camp-stool. Though our impact was slight, he dropped his burden and would have fallen but for my grasp on his arm. It was like grasping the arm of a skeleton, so thin and bone-like did it feel. His face was ghastly white; but his eyes, buried in heavy shadows, were feverishly bright. He was gasping like a winded runner. In fact, I thought he was going to collapse, but in a few minutes, he recovered somewhat. We set up his little table and seated him.

"I'm all in," he said; "slightest shock, no wind." He motioned to the waiter, who had hurried up. "Bring my friend a chair, box, anything to sit on."

He would not listen to my profuse apologies, but begged me to stay.

"Awful lonesome," he pleaded. "Join me," and with a pallid smile, he finished: "never refuse the dead."

So I stayed. He was a bottomless reservoir for drink. He mixed the drinks recklessly; and, the more he drank, the less he coughed, the better he talked. He was American all over, and evidently a thoroughbred. He knew some polo men I knew, and that, with our libations to Bacchus, cemented our friendship; so we talked of sport, of hunting, the surprising turn the great polo match had taken, of Broadway, women, and immortality. We tore the universe to shreds and rebuilt it to our liking; and, truly, if we could remember how we reconstructed it, it must have been a noble edifice, indeed.

Finally, we fell silent, gazing out into the sea—by that time, I had captured a chair to replace my box, as, verily, I needed its back to lean

against—with its unfathomable darkness and the wondrous star-spread dome overhead, and he talked of space and vast distances, and that old puzzling question man has racked his feeble brain about, "What lies beyond?"

"Only a little while," he said. "I know all, and I'm not afraid, although sometimes, when I lay sleepless listening to a baby crying, I wish I were that child, or that gay young fellow I saw kissing his girl in the park, and, sometimes, I even think I could endure life-imprisonment if I could only live. But it can not be, and I must not murmur; for ever I love gameness, above all things, whether in man or horse or dog, and when my little balance at life's bank is gone and the collector approaches, I must meet him with a smile."

So we drank some more, and as we shook hands for the twentieth time, I felt so sorry for him I wept.

Finding that he roomed at my hotel, I endeavored to lug him home, but we must have zig-zagged pretty erratically, for we found ourselves, finally, at the back door, where a chef kindly steered us to the higher regions. I saw his man get him to bed, and, of course, we had to have a last drink.

Like the straw on the camel's back, that drink broke down the last barrier between us. It loosened his tongue like a broken flood-gate, and he told me the most amazingly absurd, yet blood-stirring tale of persecution, of a vague, subtle life-destroying creature who had wrecked his life and health, and left him as he was. He waxed eloquent on the fitting vengeance he had planned, which was the lodestone that had brought him to this enervating climate, and he said he dared not risk going home for fear he would not survive the journey, his revenge unfulfilled. He told how he had so cunningly schemed that this direful monster was coming to him, and how he would need a faithful friend; and I swore to stand by him and help, anyhow.

I was in no condition to remember the ravings of a disordered brain, so, finally, I dragged myself off, to fall into bed, clothes and all, as, by that time, to undress myself was an impossible feat, and I had no man.

We became great friends. He was witty, fond of books, and a veritable encyclopedia on sport. Although we talked of many things, he never referred to that nightmarish story again. We never got quite so drunk again; perhaps that may account for it.

He was visibly failing in that burning clime. I never could quite understand why he was there. He seemed to have plenty of money and spent freely; but he had one peculiarity I heartily disliked, and that was the indiscriminate use of perfume. His rooms and person reeked of attar of roses. I spoke to him jokingly about it once, and he replied shortly, his voice as sharp as a chisel, that he disliked it as much as I did, but his tone forbade further questioning.

He brightened visibly when he received news that his uncle, in response to his urgent message, was coming to see him, and, from the manner in which he awaited his arrival, I guessed the bond between them to be a very strong one. It was, but not

in the manner I thought. His uncle was his sole heir, he told me once, and that he had no control over the disposition of the estate left in trust to him; but as the days passed and steamer after steamer came in, he grew more impatient. He would pace his rooms or the veranda like a wild animal, until weakness compelled him to sit down, or he brought on a choking fit of coughing. But, one day, a wireless message came, and, as I was going to his rooms, I took it from the boy. It was from his uncle, and the boat was due that afternoon.

I rapped on the door, which was slightly ajar. There was no answer, so I walked in. He was standing near the window, his back turned. The air was permeated with the most powerful odor of roses I ever experienced. He was working eagerly over a large glass case, and he held a small glass vial, from which he was dropping some liquid carefully. So absorbed in his task was he that I was at his elbow before he sensed my presence. With wonderful rapidity for an invalid, he turned and struck at me, missed—his momentum carrying him to the floor.

"George!" I cried.

Never had I seen such a rage distorted face as he turned toward me. His eyes literally blazed, a hectic flush suffused his face. As he recognized me, his features relaxed, the intensity of the eyes dulled, and he smiled wanly. I got him into a chair and mixed him a stiff drink.

"My God," he whispered hoarsely, "how you startled me! Why didn't you speak?"

"I made noise enough coming in," I answered and gave him the wireless.

It acted on him like the elixir of life. He was like a new man and I wondered at the affection he must have for his uncle. Then I glanced toward the glass box, and what I saw brought me to my feet, exclaiming. Inside its thick walls was a monstrous malignant spider, larger than a tarantula, more like an octopus. It was venomously attacking meat, and from the vial beside the case, lying where he had dropped it so suddenly, I judged he had been pouring rose perfume on the food. It was certainly a hideous-looking animal. Its cage was heavily wired on top, and when George, noticing my astonishment, but vouchsafing no explanation, carried it to a closet, I noticed he wore heavy gauntlets. He begged me to forget his sudden outbreak and made me promise not to mention about his strange pet to anyone.

"It's a kind of hobby," he said, "and if they knew I had it here, they might make me destroy it, although it is not dangerous."

I very much doubted his last statement, but was glad to go. The awful perfume was nauseating.

"There is something very wrong somewhere; of that, I am sure," I thought.

The uncle arrived. I was not at the boat, but their meeting must have been pathetic. In spite of his weak condition, George insisted on going. His man went with him. George was a veritable bundle of nerves, just living by force of will. I met them at dinner that evening. Warner was a big, ordinary-looking man, nothing striking except his lips. They were

fearfully thin; when shut, his mouth looked like a knife-edge. George ate little; he seemed content to hear his uncle talk and feast his eyes on him. I could not make out Warner's attitude toward his nephew. He did not drink; he seemed wary, always watching. Now and then, he looked at George in a peculiar manner. I supposed he was searching for the motive that brought him to such an infernal place in the height of summer and the importunate cablegram that had dragged him from the cool breezes of the North. Still, he was very affable and jolly and solicitous about his nephew.

It was the first night in weeks that George went to bed really sober. We sat with him a while, and he seemed actually happy.

Warner's rooms were on the other side of the hotel, facing the water. After we bade George good-night, I walked part way with him, and he indulged in some fancy expletives about the heat and food, and his tiresome journey, and the whims of invalids in general, and of that awful perfume.

"By Heavens, how it sickens me!" he said.

I didn't blame him. A little would be tolerable, but it was overwhelming, the way George used it. I would have given anything to know his real feelings toward the boy. He was a lawyer by profession and would be a very rich man when his nephew died, judging from what George had told me. Well, I was leaving that detestable place the next week, yet I hated to think of leaving that poor boy so gamely smiling in the dread reaper's face. Still his uncle was there and I felt he would be content.

The next day, they were together all day. I did not see much of them until night. Then a curious thing happened. They were standing in the lobby, and, whatever he said, George laughed loudly. Warner seemed afraid to touch George or get close to him. Then, he took him by the arm; they were evidently going to bed. At least, George was; it was after eleven.

At times, when he laughed, it caused coughing, and he had a violent coughing spell. I hastened forward and we helped him to a chair; Warner bent over him anxiously. George took a medicine-vial from his pocket and emptied it into his mouth. Scarcely had he done so when a paroxysm of coughing attacked him, and right into his uncle's face, he blew the contents of the vial. It must have been that heavy rose oil, from the smell.

Warner sprang back, his face livid, murderously deformed. For an instant, I thought he would bury his massive fist in his nephew's body, but he recovered himself, and by the time George was through coughing, he was the same quiet, solicitous friend. But in that instant I had seen the real man and it was not a very pleasant thing to see.

George was heartbroken about it, but Warner, vigorously mopping his face, assured him it was nothing. I offered to take George to his rooms, so his uncle could change his clothes and bathe. He certainly was odoriferous, and from what I know of perfumes, he was liable to be so for some days to come.

I got the poor boy to bed. He was

very weak. I didn't think he would ever leave it again and, somehow, my mind was full of that chaotic story he had told me at our first meeting. Could his uncle have been the friend in it? He looked capable of anything in that revealing second when the cloak of friendship fell. If so, he didn't need to worry about poor George's harming him.

I met Jamison, the valet, carrying a tray as I left the dining room the next day. George, he said, was very bad. The doctor was then with him. It seemed that, some time during the night, he got up, either delirious or asleep, and wandered about the hotel corridors until he was in a state of complete exhaustion. The night clerk had found him lying in a huddled heap and had him carried to his apartments.

"I'll be glad to get home, sir," Jamison complained. "What with heat and perfume, and that awful pet spider, I'm nearly crazy; but he loves the thing, sir. That's what he came down to this ungodly hole for. Bought it from a native way up the country before we came here, and he saw dozens of them before he took this one. He perfumes everything it eats. No matter where he hides the food, as long as he puts rose on it, the creature finds it. He has it running up the doors and eating on the transom-sill, from one room into another, on the closet-shelves, and lately, sir, he's been feeding it on the bed. He says it is not poisonous, but he always handles it with gloves. I don't see how he stands that vile cologne, sir. It costs him a heap of money, too. I'm most sick of it all, and that spider will bite me yet. I'll call you, sir, if he gets worse," and he hurried away.

I certainly agreed with poor Jamison on his views on perfume and spiders. A few minutes later, he called me. George was seated, dressed in his usual white, but there was a big change. Death was in his eyes. He coughed incessantly. He wanted to go to his uncle. I offered to send a boy or go myself, but he would not hear of it. He was in a highly nervous condition and our refusal only accentuated it. So, Jamison and I on each side, we started.

I wondered if Warner still smelled of perfume, and what he would say to our humoring the sick boy's every notion. As it was almost nine o'clock, he would be up and dressed. We knocked and called repeatedly, but there was no answer; so I sent Jamison to the dining-room, lobby, and office, but without result. No one had seen him that morning.

Finally, the manager came, and his pass-key opened the door. Warner lay on the floor, a little way from the bed, and there we stood transfixed —the manager, poor George, the valet, and I—and gazed down on that distorted face, swollen almost beyond recognition. It looked like apoplexy, combined with acute erysipelas. Some of the bed-clothes were trailed around him; his hand convulsively grasped a pillow. He must have died in awful agony, trying, perhaps, to reach the door. The thin lips were drawn back in a snarl, gruesome to behold.

As we stood there, suddenly George collapsed, sinking to his knees, but his eyes never left the horrible face. Lord, what a sight for a dying man

to see! We stretched him out gently, almost beside his uncle, and Jamison hurried for the doctor.

The doorway was crowded with terrified guests and servants. George gasped faintly. His fingers plucked nervously at his coat; his eyes seemed filled with a triumphant look of victory. He whispered something so low I did not catch it, and the light broke in his eyes. There they lay, uncle and nephew, side by side; one stricken in the prime of health, the other a wasted shell.

Involuntarily, my eyes turned back to the strong man, who had died so hard. The little veins in his cheek were swollen and distended; they looked like a spider's web. As that thought struck me, I knew in a flash what George had whispered and I sickened to the very soul.

Trembling like a palsied man, I staggered to my feet, one burning thought consuming me. Forcing my way through the crowded doorway, I hurried to George's room, which we had left only a few minutes before, yet it seemed like hours. I rushed to the closet, tore open the door, and looked. The tarantula's cage was empty.

Twenty-five Dollars To Go

BY LEO NOBLE BURNETT

A gambler, up against it, decides on suicide. But the disregard for money that lead him to the act, in the crisis, saved him.

N addition to being broke, Williams was intoxicated,—not an unfamiliar condition. For ten years he had been gambling the family honor and the family fortune. He was entirely rid of the honor and that he was broke would imply that he had squandered the fortune. In a strict sense, however, he could hardly be called broke. There was still $100, a sacred little sum for the emergency of a funeral. In the ups and downs of a gambling career, he had been discrete enough to snatch aside enough for his last rites, and it had never occurred to him that the money was available for any other purpose than the emergency.

He arose from the table stiffly—limb by limb. A shaky pause to gain his balance, a stagger, a shamble, and he was out of the rear door into the alley. The men were too busy nodding over their cards to notice, except one—a puffy, red fellow, who came tottering doorward. "I say, Jim, don't go just yet," he said limply, but Williams was leering down the alley. Then the door came shut, cutting off the warm odor of smoky beer fumes. In flaccid relaxation, he leaned against the side of the building.

The light from a timid Fifteenth Street lamp penetrated into the alley and partly showed his face—pale, thin, nervous and sensitive. He appeared to be a man of refined vulgarity, well dressed and probably thirty. An excellent profile, in fact, a little black mustache would have made him handsome. He took something from his overcoat pocket—a small revolver. He regarded it with his head tilted to one side, gave a hopeless little laugh, and put it back into his pocket.

"Better wait till I get to the house," he said.

If the nearby clock had not struck four or some other hour, he would have fallen asleep to awake in a police station, but it was conveniently four o'clock before the alcoholic doze had entirely conquered him, and he took a sudden brace. He turned up his coat collar, set his derby aright and put on his gloves, rocking unsteadily.

When intoxicated, Williams always tried to be a gentleman. In fact, he carried his gentlemanliness to the extent of profuse politeness. He passed out of the alley and up the street. Upon meeting occasional four o'clock wanderers, he removed his hat and bowed deeply, nearly upsetting himself. Frequently he laughed and seemed not at all like

a man who contemplated suicide. Williams had determined, however, that when the city awoke its population should be decreased by one. Why not make a final settlement with himself when he could pay his funeral expenses? The money was the excuse and the revolver was a sort of incentive. Without either, suicide for Williams would have been quite impossible.

He continued several blocks, upholding his body and his drunken dignity. A weazened little new lad, strangely alone on the street, pushed a paper before his face. Williams laughed, and taking a childish delight in confiding his condition to someone, even to a newsboy, he pulled out his wallet and opened it. To his surprise, a lonesome dime fell out and rolled toward the gutter. He pointed to it; the boy gave over the extra and scrambled after the money. Williams forgot the money and the boy, clutched the paper and continued, his footsteps echoing loudly in the big empty street.

Turning a corner, he emerged from the fashionable thoroughfare into one of those poor little districts which often exist like little rotten spots, in the very heart of a city. It was the street by the river, crowded for the most part by wholesale houses and nondescript places of business. Dismal window displays thrust up before him the waxen figures of women, uncanny spirits in dresses and hats of reduced prices. On the corner he recognized the tombstone shop which he had passed so frequently on his way to and from his room. Its grim significance stirred him, and he recalled, with a giddy little laugh, the girl whom he had seen in there among the tombstones. The incongruity of the thing tickled him.

Two blocks more, and he halted before a pathetic stone building of dilapidated grandeur. He passed up two flights of stairs, stumbled along an extremely narrow hall and pushed open a door. Switching on a light, he tossed his paper on the table. Then he balanced for a moment and half tried to remove his overcoat. The effort was too much and he sank into a chair, his hat dropping to the floor. His eyes closed and his head bent forward.

It was a littered little chamber, with papers strewn about and dirty clothes heaped on a trunk in the corner. The iron bed appeared not to have been made for several days, the spreads hanging off on the floor. The bureau was covered with collars and toilet articles, and cigarette stubs had burned small black holes in the white spread.

He sat for more than an hour, sometimes raising his head, and then letting it drop back. Dim morning light began to pry through the single window and out on the street were occasional sounds, indicating that alarms were going off and that the city entertained serious thoughts of getting up. In fact, the tendency became of local significance when a clock exploded in a room directly overhead.

Then Williams opened his eyes, held his hand to his head and stood up. He stared for a moment in bewilderment, but his features gradually cleared. Pulling off his gloves, he proceeded to the bureau where he

finally located a roll of bills in the top drawer. He passed unsteadily to the table where he made his last testament on a scrap of paper. "For my Funeral," he wrote, and placed the slip on the roll of bills. He produced the revolver and looked at it with a real affection. It was a finely-made instrument—the last remnant of family possessions.

For a few moments he stared vacantly, his black eyes grayish. He saw the newspaper and thought for the briefest second how the reporters might invade the place later in the day. Then he laughed, a self-despising little expression, and deliberately raised the revolver, pressing it against his head. His thin face twitched, and his whole body was vibrant with nervousness and suspense. He counted: "One—two—"

But Williams never reached the third count.

It was merely an advertisement in the paper spread out before him. Having caught the bold letters in the first line, he dropped the revolver and leaned intently over the paper.

"By God," he said, "I've got twenty-five dollars to go!"

He laughed immoderately, and read the advertisement again:

$75 — FUNERALS — $75

Complete in Every Detail, Including Grave in Any Cemetery, $75 up. Why pay More?

IN THE HOUR OF DISTRESS WE TREAT YOU WITH REFINEMENT AND COURTESY

Williams didn't finish reading it, but scrambled to his feet, dropping the bills and the revolver into his overcoat pocket. He picked up his hat from the floor, where it had fallen during his doze and hurried from the room.

"Twenty-five dollars to go!" he announced to the milkman in the lower corridor.

The city was now rubbing its eyes. Delivery wagons, auto trucks and workmen with pails were beginning to appear on the street. The sun appeared uncertainly between two buildings and a clock somewhere pounded six times. Williams was much steadier than he had been two hours before. He was a little unstable, to be sure, and it was with some difficulty that he tacked his way back to the saloon. He found a negro busy with a mop and chairs piled on the tables. The odor displeased him and he hurried back into the street.

He soon found himself before a furniture display window, looking at iron beds. One with shiny brass knobs struck him as a splendid example of bedcraft, but the price tag said $30, and he passed on.

Later he gazed into a window, the central object of which was a big green lamp with elaborate moss rose trimmings. A wretched woman was also looking at the display.

"How much do you suppose it costs?" he asked.

She smiled doubtfully.

"Damned pretty thing, that lamp," he murmured; "damned pretty thing."

Forgetting the woman, he went into the store, where a sleek little lad was sweeping out.

"Twenty-seven," announced the boy.

"Couldn't make it twenty-five, could you?" bargained Williams.

The boy was very sure that such a reduction was possible, but bosses don't arrive until eight. Williams wasn't quite sure that he wanted a lamp, anyway, and he passed along.

He lingered about shop windows and gazed into them with a pathetic hopelessness. He became discouraged and greatly sobered. Wandering aimlessly, his steps had led him back to the riverside street where his own rooming house was situated. Nor here were there any attractions for men about to die. It struck eight and Williams wondered if he had better go back and see about the lamp, when he found himself before the tombstone store on the corner. The darkness of early morning had given the shop a grim meaning, but now it stood out instantly as a solution. Besides, here was the girl's face smiling at him between two obelisks, as girls smile from the box offices of small theaters.

Tombstone shopping suddenly assumed unlooked-for attractions, and he entered straightway. The girl had a broom with which she had been digging around the bases of the monuments. She smiled again, more timidly than between the intervening obelisks. She was a delicate girl, and not very striking. She had uncertain brown eyes and indefinite brown hair. She looked Williams over, but didn't perceive that he was at all drunk, and never once dreamed that he expected to drive a bullet into his head as soon as he had disposed of twenty-five dollars. But she could not be criticized for any lack of insight on this score, for Williams was not exactly drunk, and at this particular time the revolver was most remote from his mind.

The Tombstone Girl only noticed that he was pale, well barbered and a little dissipated. But if a man is fair enough looking, well dressed and barbered, the average woman can overlook dissipation. Some of them even prefer it. And the Tombstone Girl was average.

He bowed politely, and she leaned her broom against a tombstone, waiting for him to speak.

It suddenly occurred to him that he was in a place of business, where people sell things and ring money into cash registers. He had come in to look at tombstones and said as much. She stepped forward to show him, asking if he had any particular pattern in mind.

"This looks like a pretty good one," he ventured, putting his hand on a large monument with ferns and cattails carved on one side, "how much?"

"I think that is three hundred dollars," she answered apologetically.

On the other side of the room were piles of small marble slabs. He fancied that the little ones were more his style and stepped over to them, followed by the girl.

"How much are these?" he asked timidly, touching one with his foot.

"They range from twenty to thirty-five dollars," she replied. "I think this one is especially dear," and she bent over to lift it to an upright position. In spite of its small size it was rather heavy and he zealously assisted her. Then they stood looking at each other. She was flushed by the exertion, and slapped her hands together to brush off the dust.

"Don't you think it is dear?" she asked finally.

"Oh, yes," he said; "pretty thing, that stone, da—— awfully pretty thing."

Then he actually did look at the stone. It was a plain white slab—as conventional a tombstone as can possibly be imagined. Its dusty white monotony was relieved only by a pair of clasped hands near the top.

"Isn't that er—a little out of date?" he suggested.

"No, indeed," she assured him; "a stone like that can never become old-fashioned, and if you don't care for the hands, we have several other patterns. There is a lamb design which is always good on a tombstone."

Williams had aristocratic notions about graveyards, and somehow neither clasped hands nor symbolic lambs made any appeal to his taste. He said that a larger stone might be more acceptable and she led the way to a small monument. It had a substantial base, and the top portion was very decently polished, with leafy pillars at the corners. This impressed him, and he inquired the price.

"That," she stated, "is one hundred dollars. You see, the polished ones come higher."

"Oh, it's most reasonable," he assured her, "extraordinarily reasonable. The polished ones come higher of course."

"It's a splendid stone," she said. "I've always wanted it for mother's grave."

Williams always did things by extremes—impassioned, impulsive things. He suddenly found himself sorry for the girl, and his pity was as sincere and wholesome as a high-pitched nature would allow.

"Couldn't some of the other relatives chip in?" he ventured, holding his chin thoughtfully.

"There aren't any other relatives," she explained, catching his sincerity and becoming confidential. "Of course, there is Uncle," she added. "He runs this store. He will be here soon, and if you wish to wait for him, he may make some reduction on this stone. You see, we're not having such a terrible rush in tombstones at this season."

They stood facing each other, leaning against opposite corners of the monument.

There was an awkward pause, during which Williams's mind subordinated the orgies of past years and became centered in this dingy universe of a tombstone shop. But the situation was hazy and the unraveling was interrupted by the girl, who asked if he would like to look at some more stones.

"No," he answered, "I guess not."

He studied her with a sane criticism. "I say, girl," he said, leaning toward her, "is that straight about the old lady's—about your mother's grave?"

He saw that he had been undiplomatic. "I'm sorry," he said in apology, "but I just wanted to say that I'll take this stone, this one here, the hundred dollar one."

The girl's face brightened with real candor. "I think that is—well, it is dear of you," she exclaimed; "it will help me to keep my job, for I have been here a whole week and I have sold just one tiny slab." In a busi-

ness-like fashion, she went to the table and took up a memorandum. He went over and sat on the edge of the table opposite her, somehow happy that it was dear of him.

"I suppose you want it engraved," she said.

"Yes, to be sure," replied Williams thoroughly startled from his reflections. "But, say, there isn't any hurry about this thing. Just let the engraving go for a while."

"Perhaps you will leave your name anyway," she suggested.

The gambler of family fortunes and honors is also a gambler of names. To all of his late associates, Williams had been plain "Jim," and it was with a tingling of pride that he stood erect and seized the lapel of his coat.

"My name," he announced, "is Williams—James E., Junior."

He was about to inquire the name of the girl, when a fussy woman in a filmy black veil entered the shop. Williams hastened to pay for his purchase, taking the roll of bills from his pocket and counting them out to her. He wanted to say something more, but the customer was fretting as customers do. Just then he startled himself with an idea.

"Miss—Miss Tombstone Girl," he faltered, "will you go to dinner with me to-night?"

The girl gave an affirmative nod.

"How's six?" he asked.

She nodded and rang the last wit of the Williams fortune into the varnished drawer of the cash register.

He left the store and got a last glimpse of her as she smiled from behind the confidence-inspiring obelisks. He walked lightly and smiled. On the corner he joined a group of people who were waiting for a car. He had no place in particular to go, but wanted to go somewhere. As the car approached, he saw the people getting out their purses and realized that he had left his last cent in the tombstone shop. He who cannot pay carfare should not ask women to go a-dining. Williams saw with a cold, startling lucidity, that his financial condition must be improved before evening.

A beautiful face makes a man resourceful. If the Tombstone Girl was not beautiful she was at least pretty and prettiness had the same effect on Williams.

Across the street was a little gray shop. It bore this sign:

ISAAC M. STEIN
PAWNBROKER

He passed over at once and drew the revolver from his pocket. He laughed slightly as he entered—a sane, sober, promising laugh—holding tenderly in his palm this last lucky remnant of family memories.

The Souvenir Gun

BY LEONARD DEWITT SHERMAN

You may have read some hold-up stories, you no doubt have, but for action, you will wager this double-cross,double-action story of a train hold-up is the last word.

UCK and I sat by our tent in Split-rock Canyon smoking our after-dinner-cigarettes. Pontuello Creek, fresh and cold from the Pecos Mountains, swirled and tinkled directly in front of the camp. We had fished the stream industriously all morning, and eaten our fill of mountain trout, fried as only Mrs. Buck knew how, and now lazily awaited an inspiration to do the next necessary thing in the enjoyment of our holiday.

"Little Buck," a pocket-size edition of his daddy, played happily about the clearing with the care-free abandon of all youngsters. From the other tent, a little way up the stream, the mellow, full-throated voice of Mrs. McGraw, lilting a perfect happiness over her simple camp duties, floated sweetly down the canyon.

Buck, smilingly watching his small son busily building a corral of sticks for a hop-toad he had captured, suddenly lifted his voice.

"Sallie," he called, "oh, you Sallie-girl!"

The singing stopped and a pretty red head popped forth from the tent door in answer.

"What is it, hon'?" she asked smilingly.

"Git yo' li'l' ol' gun," replied Buck significantly.

The red head vanished, to almost instantly appear again, followed by the energetic figure of Mrs. Buck. She was fortified with a Colt's .45.

"What is it?" she cried anxiously. "Where?"

"Beyond that big rock," replied Buck calmly, "where Sonny has got that toad corralled."

Mrs. Buck paled in sudden fright, but the gun leaped and exploded; then she sank weakly to her knees as if they no longer had strength to support her. Buck sprang to his feet and went over and helped her into the tent.

"That's pretty good fo' Massachoosetts!" he joked, trying to calm her fears. "He's all right, girlie; don't yo' worry none."

Little Buck, startled for a moment by the shot, gazed big-eyed at the writhing form which threshed about the undergrowth, and then, with a sudden, unnamed fear, seized his toad and ran to his mother.

In a few minutes Buck appeared, carrying the gun and an oiled rag.

"She's a little excited now," he explained with a grin, "but she'll git over it."

"You're a lucky dog, Buck, to have a wife like that!" I exclaimed in admiration. "The sheer nerve of it!"

"Ain't Ah," he agreed as he resumed his old seat and proceeded to clean the pistol. "An' don' Ah know it!" he went on.

"What are those notches on the grip?" I queried, "rattlers?" He hesitated.

"N-o—those are men, Ah reckon. Yo needn't get excited," he observed, at my sudden exclamation. "This yere is a sooveneer gun."

"Tell me about it."

He rolled a cigarette and grinned reminiscently.

"Yo-all may have heard—mos' ever'body has, Ah reckon—of what a time Ah had gittin' the hobbles on mah bride?"

I laughed and nodded. That wooing had been the delight of New Mexico, from Raton Pass to the Mexican line.

"Chased her way back home to Massachoosetts, an' then had to rope, throw an' hog-tie her, as yo' might say. Not that she wasn't willin'," he chuckled, but as Ol' Columbia Bagby says:

" 'She jes' wants to be chased, like all them red-headed ones. Go to it, Buck!' he advises. 'A sho't rope an' a wide loop does it ever' time.'

"She liked me all right," he went on in a bashful manner, "but she shied some at a few of our 'Western ways,' as she called 'em. The first time she visited the colonel's daughter, some durned tin-ho'n stuck up the stage, shot the guard an' copped the express box. O' co'se she had to be on that stage an' it scared her plumb cold. She was gun-shy from that minute. After ah got to know her, she wouldn't let me pack a gun when Ah was anywhere near her; so, mostly, Ah use to go gunless, Ah reckon."

"She doesn't seem to fear a gun much now," I suggested. "No," he replied, "she's a good shot now; as good as Ah am when she takes time, but Ah can still beat her on the draw an' at snap-shootin'. It's all come about since she married me. She declar'd she might as well learn to use one if she had to live with one all her life. An' yo' hear me! she certainly knows her way 'round with a six-gun, but it takes a show-down, like that rattler over there, to bring it out. Wait till Ah tell yo'.

"Ah went on to her home to be married, stoppin' over in New Yo'k on the way to get a couple rings at that Tiffany place. Man! she did love that li'l' gold ban' with the sparkler to hold it down, when Ah finally got 'em on to her. Comin' west from Chicago, we had the last section in the last car of the Limited. One ev'nin', after we'd fed up in the chuck-car, Ah takes Sallie back to the section an' tells her Ah'm goin' to hunt a smoke. Ah goes through three or fo' cars an' finally heads into a li'l' corral in the end o' one they calls a smokin' apartment, an' there Ah meets up with what looks to be an' proves to be, a bunch o' live ones. When Ah looks in an old-timer is swappin' lies with a Jew drummer an' another bald-topped gazabe. Ever' body looks up when Ah bulges in.

" 'Mind if Ah throw-in with yo' fellows?' Ah asks. 'Ah'm aching fo' a smoke an' the colored superintendent says this yere is the only corral where he allows it. Got room fo' one mo'?'

"You bet!' replies the old-timer, makin' room fo' me on the big leather seat. The smoke is so thick you can chew it, an' Ah stumbles over the hoofs of another feller, who sits hunched up in the co'ner where Ah don't notice him.

"'Excuse me, amigo!' Ah apologizes; 'couldn't see yo' fo' smoke!'

"'That's all right, ol' hoss!' he sings out hearty. 'Climb right on. Ah sometimes walk on 'em myself.' Which shows a lovin' disposition on his part, to say the least. Ah beds down beside him, full o' good feelin's. Ah knows he's West the minute Ah hears his voice—an ex-puncher, likely. He passes me a cigar.

"'Yo' needn't shy at it,' he chuckles; 'I ain't tryin' to even up on you, none, for steppin' on me.'

"'No, Ah reckon not,' Ah laughs, strikin' a match.

"'What's your brand?' he inquires.

"'O T O Bar,' Ah says.

"'No!' he exclaims. 'How's old Stillwater Jones makin' it?'

"'Oh, he's jes' as deep as ever,' Ah returns, 'a li'l' deeper, in fact; he's promoted hisself an' bought a ranch. Yo' know him?' Ah asks.

"'I reckon!' he replies emphatically. 'We were bunkies about ten years back with the old Fryin' Pan outfit.'

"'In that case, you must be Lon Murray,' Ah exclaims. 'Ah've heard tell o' yo'. What's yo' line now?'

"He hesitates fo' a second, an' while Ah'm waitin' fo' his answer, Bald-top stops sho't in the middle of a sentence, an' turns to me askin' fo' a match.

"'I'm a—buyer, now,' Murray stammers. 'Buyin' cattle for a commission house in K. C. Guess I'll have to drop off with yo' an' see if I can land a shipment from the O T O. What yo' doin' 'round this neck o' the woods?'

"'Ah'm just bringin' mah new bride home.' Ah starts in to tell him, but jes' then the train jars to a standstill on a sidin' an' waits for the up train to pass.

"'Where are we?' inquires the drummer.

"'Just below Ratoon Pass,' answers the old-timer, 'an' we'll probably have some trouble here. They's usually a bunch of tramps on this sidin' waitin' for a chance to beat their way south for the winter. You'll hear the trainmen chasin' 'em in a minute.'

"The up train passes with a roar an' a shower o' sparks. Still our train don't move, none, an' Bald-top raises a window, like he wants to see what's goin' on, sticks his head out into the darkness an' says:

"'I wonder what we are waitin' for, now?' Then he backs in an' sits down agin.

"'Reckon the brakies are huntin' for hoboes,' puts in the old-timer. Murray squeezes mah arm.

"'Let's go look—see,' he suggests.

"We steps out into the accorjeon end o' the car, where he backs me into a corner an' whispers:

"'I'm some worried, son; I couldn't tell you in there, but I'm agent fo' the Lucky Jim mine, an' we got 50,000 dollars worth of bullion aboard. We're shippin' it to Frisco in the express car. I ought to go in there now an' help the agent ride herd on it. This siding is a dangerous spot.'

"'Can't Ah help?' Ah busts in. 'Gee, man! Toss me a gun an' Ah'm in this bigger'n a wolf.'

"'Yo' better stay out, this hand,' he advises. 'No tellin' how this game is rigged, an' yo' got a wife back there, yo' say.'

"'Yes, Ah know,' Ah shoots back, 'but she's way back in the las' car out o' danger. This ain't nothin' to git het up over, anyhow; if they are after anything it's the express. Man! yo' wouldn't turn down an O T O puncher this-a-way!'

"'Well,' he compromises, 'I'll tell yo' what yo' can do. I'll lend yo' a gun an' yo' keep an eye on Bald-top. I'm some leary o' that cuss. He's been tryin' to size me up all the evenin'. I think he suspicions what I'm doin' aboard, or else he's tryin' mighty hard to find out. I can't quite figger him out. Notice how he stopped his story to listen, when you asked what my line was?'

"'Yes,' Ah says, 'an' Ah'm mighty sorry 'bout that!'

"'Never mind, son,' he winds up; 'it was a natural question an' there's no harm done yet. Beat it back now. Adios.'

"Jes' then the train starts, an' as Murray goes forward, Ah sticks the gun in mah belt an' steps back into the smoke-house. As Ah goes in, the drummer was jes' tyin' down one o' his that-reminds-me stories, and also doin' most of the laffin'. Bald-top had changed his seat an' is settin' in Murray's corner. The old-timer still clings to his tip-tilted chair, with his feet piled on the aige of the wash-bowl. Bald-top jumps as Ah pushes through the curtain, an' has his hand half way to his gun befo' he sees who it is; then he tries to cover up by goin' after his han'kerchief.

"'Your friend turned in?' he asks casually, as Ah sits down beside him.

"'Yes,' Ah answers; 'Lon's huntin' his blankets. Says ridin' a train frazzles him out.'

"The train begins to slow down an' finally stops. Sounds o' runnin' steps flashes by the car. Bald-top gits up an' sticks his head outen the winder agin.

"'*Whang!*' cracks a six-shooter outside, an' Baldy ducks back into a shower of glass, that sprays all over the place. He pulls his gun in earnest this time an' blazes away through the window. Ah was some surprised, but Ah couldn't connect up anything Baldy was doin' with a hold-up of the express car, so Ah decides to lay low an' watch which way the cat is goin' to jump, an' nail him if necessary. Then Ah happens to look at the Jew.

"He's down on all fours, tryin' to crawl under the leather seat an' stuff a roll o' bills into the top of one shoe at the same time. He couldn't have done either in a thousand years, but he tries jes' as hard. It was dead funny. About that time, somebody sticks two forty-fives in the doorway back of us an' hollars:

"'Nds up!'

"'Well, mah gosh!' Ah shouts, some disgusted at bein' caught watchin' the wrong cat; but jes' the same, not forgettin' to clamp mah han's over the top of mah haid. 'This looks like a reel shore-enough hold-up. Who in blazes granted yo' a license?' Ah asks.

"'Softly, kid, softly!' replies the road-agent.

"He was a big strappin' cus, with his Stetson pulled over his eyes, an' his silk neckerchief pulled up over his nose, bradin' pen fashion. One of his guns points at the pit o' mah stummick an' the other at Bald-top, who has settled back on the seat next the window, with his gun in one hand.

"'You—Baldy!' snapped the hold-up, 'jes' reach over an' drop that six-gun outen the window. Careful, now! Right! Now, yo' kid, drop yo' gun with the tips of yore fingers an' toss it outside. That's the boy!' He looked at the Jew.

"'What's little Brighteyes doin' under the seat?' he chuckles. 'That's no place to put money, amigo. Toss it here an' let me take care of it for yo'. Some one will rob yo' shore, if yo' flash yore money 'round careless like that-a-way.' Ah had to laff.

"'That's it!' Ah shouts, 'put it in the savin's bank while yo' got a chance!' The road-agent whirls on me.

"'Yore turn, now, kid; loosen up an' le's see what yo' got to put out at interest!' Mah laff kinder peeters out.

"'Say, yo' long-legged galoot, do Ah look like Ah had money?' Ah hollars, gittin' madder ever' minute. Ah plumb overlooks the fact that Ah'm due to git shaken down. Ah had a notion to take a chance an' climb him. If it ain't fo' that gun, gee! It looks as big as a cannon an' she's pinted right at mah stummick. That gets mah nerve ever' time. That's no place in the world to pint a gun! The hold-up is eyein' me steady an' his face begins to git hard.

"'Well!' he snaps.

"'Say, hombre!' Ah tries to stall him along, 'jes' as a personal favor, would yo' mind elevatin' that forty-five a trifle,—up to where Ah can look into it, say? If yo' git careless with that there trigger, yo' shore goin' to mix up my digestive apparatus some!'

"'If yo' can count ten seconds, yo' know how long yo' got to live!' he states coldly, 'an' yore stummick won't do yo' no good after that!'

"'Oh well!' Ah replies, 'if that's the way yo' feel about it, Ah reckon Ah'll have to come through!' an' Ah tosses him what's left of mah roll.

"'Yore turn, Baldy!' grins the two-gun. 'Le's see if that's a roll of bills you got stowed away in that side pocket.'

"Bald-top sticks a tremblin' han' into his coat pocket an' drills the road-agent through the off eye, in one motion, shootin' through the cloth! It turns out he has a little automatic cached away in there.

"'I couldn't do that again in a hundred years,' states Bald-top, calmly, as the road-agent crumples at the knees an' slides forward on his face, too dead to skin.

"'Ah should say *not!*' Ah shouts. 'Man! yo' took a long chance!'

"'Keep yore hands up!' warns Bald-top suddenly, pintin' the automatic in mah direction.

"'Well, for the love o' tripe!' Ah hollers, 'here's another one! Was you took sudden this-a-way, or is this a premeditated jump?'

"'Nothin' sudden about me 'cept my shootin',' grins Baldy. 'I reckon my companaros must have cleaned out the express car by now, so I'll mosey along. I guess we didn't fool you

up some!' he boasts. 'I dunno who this tall, wall-eyed hold-up is. He must have set into the game on his own hook. Adios.'

"'Put 'em up!' says someone from nowhere. Instead of elevatin' his han's like he's told, which proves he didn't have no real savvy, Bald-top whirls in surprise, an' keeps on whirlin' ontil he sags down into a corner, dead as Jonah.

"'*Boom!*' thunders a forty-five an' the old-timer steps lightly out o' the toilet room with a smokin' Colt in his fist. Things were comin' so fast, Ah plumb overlooks him in the mix-up.

"'Say!' Ah yells, 'Ah'm goin' to have nervous prosperity if this keeps up! Can Ah put mah han's down now, or are yo' one of them things, too?'

"'It's all right, son,' laughs the old-timer. 'Put 'em way down an' git that hold-up's guns an' we'll go out forward an' see how the express agent is makin' it. Sounds like he might need some help.'

"We stampedes out, regardless, fallin' over the feet o' the Jew, who still lays huddled on the floor with his head stuck under the seat like a chicken, thinkin' he's hid, Ah reckon. We finds a battle ragin' up near the express car, but they hadn't got into it. Murray is onderneath with one arm busted, but still doin' business with his bes' shootin' han'. One of them had stuck up the engin' crew. The old-timer bumps him off in sho't order an' then we stays with the crew ontil they gits the train to movin'. We crawls back over the coal car an' fin's Murray in with the agent, who is fondlin' an eight-gage gun an' don't have a scratch to show fo' the fuss. When we gits back into the smokin' apartment we discovers Bald-top an' the road-agent layin' there with all their pockets turned inside out."

"What became of the Jew drummer?" I asked.

"He was gone," chuckled Buck. "Yes, indeedy! He was some possum! It seems, after we leaves, he gits up an' prospects Baldy an' the hold-up fo' ever'thing they has, an' then goes right plumb through the train, like the grace o' heaven through a camp-meetin', passin' the contree-bution box as he goes; an' seein' he packs a gun an' appears sudden like, most all the congregation donates. We-all follars his trail through, an' he leaves plenty o' sign, too! Yo'-all could tell jes' where he's been an' what he's done by merely lookin' at them passengers. Some of 'em still sets with their han's up, thinkin' we's another relay, Ah reckon. Some was crouched between the seats, an' others, in the made-up berths, is rolled up in their blankets. When Ah discovers that this stick-up is fo' the purpose o' goin' through the passengers as well as the express car, Ah begins to get some worried about Sallie, an' heads hot-foot fo' the las' car, follared by the old-timer.

"Befo' we gits there, though, the train slows up fo' a station an' the sheriff comes bulgin' in an' stops us."

"'Seen anything o' Slim Behr?' he questions, fingerin' his gun, an' lookin' like he hoped he warn't too late.

"'What's he look like?' asks the old-timer.

"'Fat; black headed!' snaps the sheriff. 'He's a Jew.'

"The old-timer looks at me some foolish—an' Ah reckon Ah returns it.

"'My gosh! Anything special yo' want him fo'?' he asks the sheriff.

"'You bet I want him!' exclaims the officer. 'Five thousand up for him, dead or otherwise. He's wanted in three states. He's the worst dad-binged hold-up west o' the Missouri. Him an' a bald-headed son-of-a-gun known as Slippery Pete, work the trains on the sidin' with a gang who pass as hoboes, workin' their way south. Jes' had a wire from the Pass sayin' he was suspected o' bein' a-board—'

"'Let me by, sheriff,' Ah butts in. 'Ah got a wife back here in the last car.'

"Jes' then a brakie, who comes up durin' our talk, cuts in:

"'All right, sheriff,' he says, 'guess we got your man out on the back platform. He tried to take a diamond ring away from a lady in the last berth an' she jes' snatched his gun away an' backed him up into a corner!"

Buck passed me the weapon he'd been cleaning.

"An' that there's the gun," he chuckled.

Blessed are the Poor

BY STUART B. STONE

Two men on the ocean in an open boat—one rich, the other poor—both love the same girl. The penniless one playing a long chance, sells his share of fresh water for the other's fortune. Both are rescued. Who wins the girl?

THE sun of twenty-two north had been shedding its superheated rays upon the little open boat for two hours, when Wynant roused. His first action was to mutter, "Water—water—quick!" his next, to jerk a large tin can to his swollen lips. He licked through the jagged opening at the fluid now more precious than any rare attar; then, remembering Gantz, crumpled in the stern, he drew the can from his mouth, strove with his conscience, and acted decently. Gantz sat up just in time to see the life-giving liquid replaced in the bottom of the boat.

He shook his clenched fist at Wynant. "Confound you, Bob! You're a pig and a coward."

"Shut up!" snapped Wynant. "I could have swilled the whole of it. It's your turn now."

Gantz grabbed up the can. After the first gulp, the other laid hands upon it. "Hold on—I just wet my tongue, Sam. We're bound to make it last."

Gantz held fast. "Let go—I must have it—I'll die!"

Wynant clapped his hand upon the other's throat. He knew just where and how to close down on a windpipe, and a second or so later, he deposited the water-can in the bow behind him. Gantz glared at the stronger man, then the lines of his face relaxed.

"You're right, Bob. Help me to die half way like a man."

Wynant nodded understandingly. Both turned to crane about at the horizon in the forlorn hope of dim, blue peak or low-lying gray beach. There was nothing. Only the hungry ocean seemed to lap and lick at the derelict boat in anticipation of the coming morsel. Wynant sighed, then began to drum idly on the side of the boat. Gantz watched the proceedings irritably.

"Cut it out," he growled finally. "Let's take another drink—a big one—and see what happens."

Wynant reached behind him, but brought his hand out empty. "No," he said, shaking his head, "let's figure the odds first."

His companion threw back his head and laughed unmirthfully. "You're the original optimist, Bob. The odds are just the billions of tons of brine out there to the quart of *aqua pura* in the can."

"There's a chance,—maybe," insisted Wynant. "A slim chance—for one."

Gantz's blood-marked eyes narrowed. Wynant relapsed into deep study and appeared to be making calculations with the aid of his fingers.

"As near as my muddled brain can estimate," he said finally, "it's been three days and nights since we got away from the Equatoria in this dinky boat which everybody else had overlooked. That's just guessing—I can't tell how much time we've spent in this delirium that passes for sleep. The currents and the winds have been sweeping us steadily southward. The Santa Ynez Islands ought to be dead ahead to the south. It's a matter of three or four days more—maybe a little longer—if old Lady Ocean out there doesn't get her temper ruffled."

Gantz shook his head. "It won't do, Bob. We ate the last bite we had two days ago. We're weak. The water couldn't pull us through."

"There's a long chance that the water might pull one through. Cut that chance squarely in two—" Wynant made an expressive gesture.

Gantz studied the gently-rolling ocean for some minutes. "And Eleanora?" he asked.

Wynant stared questioningly at the man in the stern. "She got away in the first boat with the sailors, right after we rammed the derelict. They had oars and sails. She ought to be on dry land this minute. I'd bet three to one on the proposition."

For a long time the other kept his head in his hands. When he spoke, it was without raising his face. "Of course, you're the one best bet for Eleanora, Bob. You're worth a hundred thousand dollars if you're worth a cent. You can give her the things she's been used to, the comforts and pleasures that are bread and drink to her. I have nothing. But I want her —God help me!"

"You're the better looking—and you've a way with women," countered Wynant. "She might choose you—and want me when it was too late."

Gantz glared. "Confound you and your money."

"It's a precious lot of good out here," gloomed Wynant.

There was a period of silence, in which an unreasoning mutual hatred sprang up between these two old college friends. "I could take the blooming stuff, Sam," said Wynant. "I was always the stronger."

"You could never drink it," growled the other. "I'd manage to spill it for you."

Wynant curled up in the bow of the lazily-rocking boat.

"Don't go to sleep," snapped Gantz. "I'm apt to drink that water."

"If you do—" growled Wynant, shaking his fist.

"Hush!" snarled Gantz. "We're talking too much. It makes us thirstier."

"Hang it all! We'll each take another good swig right now," said Wynant, reaching for the can.

The man in the stern hurled himself at his half-prostrate companion. "No, you don't! We've got to save it. Remember Eleanora. You said there was a chance for one."

Wynant turned over and doubled up, growling and fuming. Gantz dropped in the stern. Within another minute, both had drifted into the feverish delirium which had mercifully passed so much of the time. An hour, two hours passed, while the ancient ocean gently heaved her boundless breast and the tropic sun sent down its furnace rays. Both men muttered

in their sleep, crying now for water, and now murmuring the name of the girl who was probably safe beneath the fronded palms to the south. When they again awakened, both were perceptibly weaker. This time, Gantz reached for the water-can. He had no more than wet his blue lips when Wynant pulled it away. Gantz dropped his body over against the other and prevented him from getting more than a taste of the liquid.

"Don't be—a hog—because you can, Bob," he gasped.

Wynant struck his fellow-traveller with his clenched fist three or four times, but put down the can. Both strained again for the land that would not rise from the sea.

"What's that?" shouted Gantz, pointing toward a gray mist that sat upon the southwestern ocean.

Wynant peered. "Clouds—you're seeing things." Both men talked with difficulty. There followed a long, sullen silence.

Wynant finally spoke. "What the deuce are we going to do about that water?"

Gantz raised his head from his hands. He looked with his bloodshot eyes straight into Wynant's. "You think you've the correct dope, Bob—about there being enough water to pull one through, but not enough for two?"

"I didn't say that," growled Wynant. "There's a slim chance for one. Divide it, and neither has the chance of a snowball at the equator."

"Then I want to make you a proposition. I've a half-interest in that can of water. I'll sell it to you for one hundred thousand dollars. I imagine that's about your pile."

Wynant barked out a kind of a laugh. "Say, five dollars a drop. Your nerve holds up well, Sam."

Gantz leaned forward, pointing a dirty, trembling forefinger at the other. "What good is your hundred thousand if you die like a dog in this boat—and never see—her?"

Wynant's face darkened. "What good would it do you? You can't last much longer without water."

"I'll take the long chance. If I were safe on shore, I couldn't ask her to marry me. And if you were there with your confounded hundred thousand—well, Eleanora's human."

Wynant looked out to sea, seeming to ponder the problem. The other watched him keenly. Both men licked with dry tongues at their dryer lips.

"It's all in your favor, Bob," urged Gantz. "With your constitution, you'll pull through with all the water. And if I cash in my checks, why you'll still have your money—and—and Eleanora."

Wynant shook his head. "No, I couldn't do it. It's too caddish. It would be the same as murdering you. We'll drink the water and live or die alike. Keep a stiff upper lip, Sam. Maybe a miracle will happen."

Gantz wrung his hands, brandished his fist in Wynant's face, grabbed and weakly attempted to shake him. "No, no, no, blast you! I won't touch a drop. Listen. It's a square deal, Bob. You needn't get so altruistic. You're paying enough for the stale, hot stuff—five dollars a drop. Life's no good to me without that hundred thousand—without her. What's the good of us both dying, if we can save one? I

won't touch a drop anyhow—I swear it!"

Wynant protested again and again, and at each protest Gantz insisted more fiercely. The very fierceness of his insistence was weakening him. A mad delirium brightened his eyes. His hands shook. Finally Wynant turned on him petulantly.

"Ask a decent price and I'll consider it. I'm getting mighty thirsty."

"The hundred thousand—nothing less," declared Gantz.

"Give you twenty-five thousand."

Gantz shook his head.

"Fifty."

"No, no, no."

"A hundred thousand dollars then—and little good it will ever do you. I'm going to take a drink."

Gantz grabbed the other's hand. "Hold on—I want a written contract. Your word's all right, Bob, but this delirium might make a man forget—or somebody might die."

Wynant sneered. "What are you going to write it with, sea water?"

"Haven't you a pencil—a fountain-pen?"

"No."

"I suppose you've blood in your veins yet. I can scratch it out."

Gantz fumbled in his pockets until he produced a pen knife and a cabinet-size photograph of a beautiful young woman. The other watched him darkly.

"Here, stick it into your arm—keep clear of the arteries," directed Gantz. "I'll dictate, without any 'whereas' or 'in consideration of.'"

Wynant took the pearl-handled toy and gouged recklessly at his bare arm. With the welling blood he followed Gantz's dictation, tracing a rough, red scrawl on the back of the photograph:

"I owe Samuel Gantz $100,000 for his half-share of water in boat adrift in Pacific about 20 north, 160 west."

Gantz took back the photograph, wiped off the surplus blood and placed it carefully in an inner pocket. Wynant took up the water-can and looked at it as if it possessed some evil charm. Presently he lifted it to his lips and lapped at the contents, once, twice. Gantz watched the proceedings, purling and snarling like a tiger-cat. Then Wynant pulled the can from his lips, twirled it about in his hands, swung his arm back and flung the thing far out into the sea.

"I'll die a man—a poor man," he said quietly.

As the can splashed into the sea, Gantz laughed harshly. "That's right—fill up the ocean!" The next instant he turned on Wynant. "You fool—you blithering, gibbering, doddering fool!" he raged. They fought madly, blindly, tooth, nail and foot, while the boat rocked. Once, as Wynant flopped the weaker man back into the stern, the frail craft shipped gallons of water. After a bit, the two, exhausted beyond the point of further struggling, fell apart. Wynant tumbled into the bow and went off into delirium, mumbling something about fishing the water-can from the bottom of the sea; Gantz lay, face to the mounting sun, and murmured over and over, "I'm going to live—live—live—live—"

The day wore on. The sun blazed almost overhead, then dipped down,

down, out China way. The two men spent the long, hot hours in a babbling fever-dream interrupted by starting-up fits in which they raved and fought. After a while this gave way to a deep slumber, a slumber too profound to suit any physician.

Toward sunset the slight southward breeze stiffened. The gentle undulations of the sea lengthened and heightened. The boat rocked considerably, almost to the point of upsetting, and rolled its stupefied passengers about. Far to the south a gray-blue mist showed dimly, grew larger, took on solidity, assumed island-shape. A strong current assisted the wind in carrying the boat swiftly shoreward. Lofty hills, covered with spiked and fronded vegetation, loomed up. The boat made slantingly for a beach of clean shingle. Finally a big roller took the frail thing, lifted it high into the air and let it down upon the beach with a jolt that flung its swooning occupants well up the easy incline and hurled them out of the shadow of death.

Wynant was the first to arouse. He raised himself upon his elbow and mumbled something about Eleanora Kemper having sold the water-can to a whale. A dash of spray whipped him in the face, stinging him into life. Gantz was just opening his eyes. Wynant heard a rippling, trickling murmur of running water. At first he imagined it a continuation of the fever-dream, but it kept up. He looked about him and saw where a brook cut its way through rock and sand to the sea. He crawled slowly toward the stream and let his hot head droop from the bank while he gurgled and lapped at the cold, fresh water. The liquid filled his eyes and ears, choked him, almost strangled him, but he continued to dangle his head in it, rolling and splashing it about in crazy fashion. Finally he remembered Gantz. He struggled to his feet and stumbled back. Gantz's eyes were shut. Wynant bent over him and tried to rouse him. The eyes opened again, but the lids drooped back in spite of Wynant's vigorous shaking. The stronger man, using every bit of his slightly revived strength, dragged the sleeper to the brookside and soused his head in the water, pinched, slapped, pounded him into consciousness. When Gantz could sit alone, Wynant foraged along the beach. He found two cocoanuts. They ripped the husks from these, ate the meat greedily, and drank more of the water. Then, with little curiosity as to where they were, they found a nook in the thick, fragrant tangle, and slept, soundly and naturally. To Gantz, it seemed that as he slept, he heard the chatter of human voices along the strand below them.

When Gantz awakened, streaks of sunlight were filtering down through leaves of cocoa-palm and mango. Wynant was standing by his side, regarding him with a queer expression.

"They're here," announced Wynant. "Get up—Crœsus."

The title caused Gantz, in sudden remembrance, to feel for the photograph. It was safe. He smiled grimly. "As a navigator, Bob, you're a failure—or else these islands have moved northward several days' journey." He looked at the other in sudden uneasiness. "They were your own

calculations, though. You can't say I tricked you."

Wynant scowled. "I stand by my bargain. You can get the whole blooming boat crew to witness it now, if you're afraid."

"A mighty bad bargain for you, Bob."

"I'm strapped," said Wynant. "I'm not whining."

Gantz shrugged his shoulders. "I took a long chance—a hundred to one, as it seemed. I won. I'm sorry, Bob, but—well, I won."

"Leave off the sympathy," growled Wynant. "Let's wash up, breakfast, and let her settle the whole thing here and now."

After the meal of cocoanuts, as they walked briskly toward a point on the beach where smoke curled lazily skyward, Wynant stopped suddenly. "Suppose—suppose Eleanora should be influenced by the thought of my wealth—that is, the wealth I once had—and—and made her selection accordingly. She's human, Sam. It would be hardly fair to her." He considered for a moment. "Nor to me."

"You'd both be stung, Bob," put in Gantz. "And I should be rich in gold and poor in everything else."

"She ought to know about the changed status of things," said Wynant.

"Then, if she were—as you say, human—she might take me for the hundred thousand, and I shouldn't want her that way, Bob."

"She ought to know," said Wynant doggedly.

"Ye-e-es," Gantz gave in, grudgingly.

They stepped around a clump of palms and almost collided with Eleanora Kemper. She stopped in her tracks, both hands raised slightly, ripe mouth open, and the fine brown eyes growing big with surprise, conjecture, joy. Both men watched keenly to see for whom the brown eyes held this glad light of recovery, but they could not tell.

"Oh, I am glad—glad!" she cried. "It is wonderful. I thought you were lost—both—both lost!"

She stepped forward and extended a hand to each. Wynant made the explanation of their presence in fifty short words.

"We want to know—whether you care for either of us like—like we both want you to care," blurted Gantz.

"And if it's one of us, which one?" added Wynant.

Eleanora Kemper drew back, stunned with surprise. "Here—now?" she gasped. "Why—why—at this time and place?"

"We want to know," said Wynant. "There's something happened between us. We just want to know—now—here."

"There won't be any trying to persuade you—nor anything unpleasant said or done," put in Gantz. "But we both feel like we just have to know. We both—I love you."

"You've known that always," said Wynant. "It's a little rough on you here, at this time, maybe; but, surely, you could indicate which—if either."

"Yes," said Gantz, "which—if either."

At the first of this, the girl had shrunk from them as if they had suddenly become a different order of

creature. But as their tones grew earnestly pleading, gently urgent, she seemed to understand. She stood, hesitant, an appealing figure in bedraggled gown, the mass of loose, black hair streaming about the bare, tanned neck. It was some minutes before she spoke.

"I think—yes, I know I'm glad you have said these things. Before our party started on this tour, back there in the old life of gayety, nothing but gayety, I'd probably have resented it. But it seems to me a hundred years ago that we sat upon the deck of the Equatoria and listened to the orchestra playing that Viennese waltz just before everything happened. That was another world—a world not half so real and true as this. I feel somehow, that this casting away is just the real beginning of my life—that I had merely danced and laughed before. I sat in the boat through the long hours and watched those strong, silent sailormen rowing, pulling the rest of us helpless creatures out of the greedy jaws of the sea, and I thought about my life back there—all frills and fancy trimmings, nothing real, nothing vital. And—and I think the thoughts that came to me out there, and the awakening I experienced, and the resolutions I formed, as I watched those sturdy men who could do things, have helped me to make my decision—here—now—between you two."

She stopped and looked searchingly from one to the other.

"There was one thing I forgot to say—" began Wynant; but she silenced him with a wave of the hand.

"Because you are so wealthy and because you would naturally lead me back to the frills and fancy trimmings—"

"Wait," interrupted Gantz, "we agreed to tell you—"

"And because Sam is poor," she went on, unheeding, "with a fight to make in the world, needing the help and sympathy that I long to give now to some good man—"

"Hold on—listen—things have changed!" shouted Bob Wynant.

"And maybe not altogether because of these things—but to a great extent I know—because I have always hesitated between you—"

"Stop! You don't understand!" cried Wynant.

"I choose Sam," finished Eleanora Kemper. She stepped forward and reached forth her hand to Gantz.

To her wonderment, Gantz hesitated and did not grasp her hand nor give her the expected kiss. He was fumbling in every pocket he possessed, fumbling for something which required an age-long minute in the finding. Finally, he produced a photograph, the face of which she could not see, but upon the back of which she could see a red scrawl. Gantz held the picture above his head, then started to tear it asunder. Wynant sprang at him.

"No, no, no—it's yours! You have to keep it—you can't escape!"

But Gantz was too quick. The tropic breeze whisked away a hundred pieces of torn cardboard before Wynant could pinion the other's wrists. Realizing the situation, Wynant drew back. Gantz reached for the waiting hand and drew her to him. For a minute, Bob Wynant watched them, then he turned and walked away.

The Marble Medium

BY OSCAR LEWIS

The moral to this story is in the last paragraph and it's a good one. But a better moral is in the fibre and soul of the story. It has to do with the truth that what we can't sense, we hate.

GENTLE reader, did you ever carry a hundred-and-forty pound hod up three flights of tapering ladders? Did you ever push a wheelbarrow full of mortar up a plank that bears down at you from a thirty degree angle? Did you ever dip a hoe into a steaming trough of slaking lime? If you have done these things, did you keep it up nine hours a day and twenty-seven days a month? Did you?

If so, how did you spend the other four days? Did you read helpful books? Did you attend the church on the rise of the hill or the band concert in the park? And did you now and then draw your young daughter—who was your little girl but the day before yesterday—down on the low stool beside you and stroke her hair, which she no longer wears in pig-tails, and smile down into her eyes and laugh with her and talk with her, and to her—and about her?

In short, did you make her understand that this father person was a human being and a friend and that he might care really, and caring—be interested? Did you do these things on those days that were not of the twenty-seven? Did you? Jim O'Neil didn't. He got drunk.

And because he got drunk—which, by the way, was a very wrong thing to do and one that the reader should condemn absolutely, and probably will, unless he himself happens to know the dank, grinding weightiness of wet mortar—because he got drunk on his days off and became fixed in his daughter's mind as the "Old Man" when he might have been Dad, because he did this, he crowned with a great happiness a life that otherwise would almost certainly have been drab, dull—surely stupid.

Had it ever occurred to Cassy O'Neil to regard her only parent as anything beyond the stolid person who slept in the big bed nights and who shuffled out wearily each morning and shuffled in still more wearily ten hours later, and who was the direct cause for sundry meals and endless cleanings up; had it occurred to her to look upon her father differently, she would probably have become friendly with him—for he was really a good sort—and finally confidential. Then there would have been an awful rumpus and Jim O'Neil would have sworn earnestly, and his daughter's life would not have known the great happiness.

Jim O'Neil's way of living did not tend towards the development of a broad outlook upon life. He was not of the thinkers. He worked with his

head only infrequently and the result was never wholly satisfying. He handled thoughts clumsily. He could not range them systematically nor pile nor sift them logically. They were cumbersome things to be mawed over laboriously, deliberately, and always one at a time. He was heavy, clouded, dull—and unsurmountably, unalterably prejudiced.

His daughter Cassy, on the other hand, was something of a philosopher. Her surroundings, habit of environment—everything—made for a serious view of life, for solemnity. Materialism that was pitilessly uninspired made life a bare, sober reality. There was nothing to encourage the spectacles of rosy hue. Yet Cassy, in the midst of this atmosphere, and of it, was blithe, airy, winsome. She was on this account no strange phenomenon, no rose springing from a garbage heap, nor any such freak. She was just a blithe young human being who was being blithe and young and human and if Jim O'Neil had asked her on that first Sunday evening what she had been doing, she would have told him unhesitatingly.

But Jim O'Neil did not ask her on that Sunday evening, nor on Monday evening, nor on any of the evenings succeeding. And when finally he did find out, the thing had been going on for four weeks to the day. And the person who told him was not Cassy at all.

John Kelsey was probably little versed in the technique of the dramatic denouement. When he had some news to tell, however, he generally managed to deliver its full value.

"Wonder if Jim's girl has made him acquainted with her bohemian friends yet.' Has she, Jim?"

It was early in the evening. The sawdust on the floor was just beginning to be kicked under the card tables and the floor itself kept a perfectly even keel. There was only one row of buttons on the bartender's coat and it was clear that this was no time for foolish argument. Jim O'Neil must have five beers before he could talk. And he was only beginning his third.

"Of course it ain't none of my affair," continued John Kelsey with vast seriousness, "but as a man of family myself, I say to you, Jim O'Neil, that you can't be too careful. Cassy's been a good girl and a dutiful girl and when the wife tells me as how she's been going down to Samson Street every day for the last month and being sculped, I says that it was a shame and that the next time I saw Jim O'Neil I'd tell him so.

" 'You and me and Jim O'Neil is one kind of folks' I tells the wife, 'and Cassy's like us. And these painters and sculptors is another kind altogether, and Cassy's devilish pretty. And,' I says to her, 'you can mark my word, there ain't going to be no good come of it.'

" 'Oh, it ain't so bad,' says the wife. 'Cassy tells me as how she gets lonesome staying alone in the house all day. And then these friends are all so nice to her. The child likes to be noticed, and besides, it pleases the dear to have her pretty face copied.'

" 'Face,' I repeats, 'hum-m-m! Wife, it's little you know of it.'

" 'John,' says she quickly, 'John, what do you mean?' "

" 'Nothing at all,' says I. 'Remem-

ber the time we went to the museum at Golden Gate Park?'

"'Yes.'

"'Well,' says I, 'you saw the statues.'

"The wife didn't answer for a minute. Just stood and looked. 'John,' she says finally, speaking kind of soft like, for she and Cassy was good friends, 'John, it's a shame.'

"'It is, indeed,' I tells her."

Jim O'Neil had said not a word. But he was not at ease. Something warned him that he was not following all that John Kelsey was saying. He raised his thick glass slowly, thinking painfully. And then the glass stopped and Jim O'Neil held it poised, its brim level with his chin, while realization slowly came to him. Very slowly and carefully he sat the glass down upon the damp bar. Very carefully and slowly he laid a dime and two nickles down beside it.

And then he walked out; head forward tilted, eyes on the floor; very quietly and very deliberately, but with menace in the rolling slump of his shoulders.

Cassy O'Neil, sleeve rolled up above a dimpled elbow, dipped an inquiring hand into the soapy warm water of the dish pan, rotated it, and pulled out a final fork. Then she poured the water out and tilted the empty pan against the side of the sink. The water coasted down the drain, surprising the air somewhere below and driving it out with a swishy, sucking sound—a sound that prevented Cassy's hearing the soft opening and closing of the outer door.

She picked up the drying towel and was reaching for a cup when a quick, unfamiliar step in the short hall caused her to turn.

In the threshold bulked the form of her father. His eyes looked into hers and there was that in their expression which caused a fear-tightening of her throat. She fell back a few indecisive steps and at this confession of fear, Jim O'Neil advanced into the room. He moved quickly and not awkwardly, and there was about him something of finality, something that suggested the inexorable workings of a great basic law. Inflexible, stern, and yet impartial; more terrible than sinister, and merciless rather than cruel.

Cassy, hands gripping the edge of the table behind her, raised to her father's, a face that was frankly frightened. He, noting nothing, took her by the arm and led her half resistingly into the other room. There she sat on the extreme edge of her small bed and regarded him silently. Slowly and with stolid face he pulled from the back of the closet a wicker telescope basket. This he placed on the floor and into it emptied the contents of the upper drawer of the oak veneered dresser. With this he placed the two or three dresses from the closet. Finally he added some articles —comb, brush, mirror—from the top of the dresser and with them he, after some hesitation, placed a small picture in a dented silver frame. The picture was of Cassy's mother. He then fitted the cover on and strapped it down, tucking the ends under the strap and out of the way.

Taking the basket from the floor, he motioned for her to precede him out into the hall. Her coat and little

black velvet hat hung on the tiny hall rack. He took them down and passed them to her one by one.

"Put them on," he said.

It was the first word that he had spoken. Cassy had said nothing whatever, though she once or twice raised her hand and brushed it waveringly across her forehead.

She put on the coat and hat, and when he opened the door, stepped outside. He sat the basket down in the entry beside her and closing the door, bolted it. He stood still for a moment until he heard her turn the door knob and soon after go slowly down the steps. Then he went back to the kitchen.

It could not have been more than a week or so later that Jim O'Neil paid a visit to the home of a prominent millionaire. His purpose was not social, but business. Jim O'Neil understood this perfectly and allowed the servant to lead him through devious hallways and paths to a white building in the midst of the battlemented garden.

The place was fitted with a magnificence that took his breath away, but when the servant entered boldly into it, Jim took a firmer grasp upon his box of tools and materials and followed in his wake.

In an alcove off the great main room, they came upon a not very large group of men and women standing before a cylindrical column of white cloth.

This, though Jim O'Neil could not be expected to know it, was a rather important event that took place from time to time within the white building on the millionaire's grounds. Its importance lay in this: whenever this group was gathered here, it meant that the millionaire had secured something else worthy of adding to his collection of American art.

It was probably due to the millionaire's native courtesy (and not, as many thought, because of his fondness for giving a theatrical tinge to his deeds,) that he always chose this means of making the acquisition public. Surely it could have been nothing but courtesy that prompted him to invite these critics to view and to pass upon his judgement. And to pass judgement was really what they did, for it was always in their presence and always after they had expressed approval of the work, that its real, its actual addition to the collection took place—that the painting was bracketed to the wall or the statue sealed to its base. As to the miniature unveiling that preceded this, well, perhaps the millionaire's leaning toward the mildly spectacular was evident here.

The servant halted Jim O'Neil at a decently respectful distance and there bade him wait.

The millionaire, a reasonably young appearing man with a satisfying brown Vandyke, was talking.

"Clara Boone, to my mind," he was saying, "has never done anything finer. The spirit that she has caught here does not seem to be something which she deliberately set out to obtain. It makes one feel rather, that she found these things actually existing somewhere and they so delighted her that she copied them down with a joyful fidelity. The refreshing, unconscious grace, the exquisite purity of youth and beauty—the sheer, airy winsome-

ness of it—seem to be inherently a part of the subject."

This much Jim O'Neil heard, but the words held no interest for him and his thoughts drifted afield. He wondered if his cement had begun to harden yet. He was afraid that it would if he had much longer to wait before going to work. But when he looked again, the millionaire was pulling the cord that swept the cloth aside and revealed the statue.

Jim O'Neil's part in the ceremony was to seal the statue to its place. There was about its base a groove that was to be filled out, making it flush with the oval base. That groove, his trowel and the cement, were the only things that directly concerned him. There was nothing else. The elation engendered by art, he did not know. Yet the statue held his attention.

And the statue merited the wrapt attention that he gave it. Gay and vivid and fresh as an ocean-blown breeze was this girl-figure that lightly knelt upon the sloping marble turf. Life flowed from it; head tilted with the alert grace of the wood sprite; all tense, wild, vital, wind-blown; breathing of that convincing joy of youth. Pure it was as the marble from which it was created, and Jim O'Neil knew it to be very, very beautiful. He knew it even as he knew that in form, in spirit, in the very mute appeal of presence, the statue was Cassy.

"There is a certain lingering sweetness about it—"

Cassy's father desired greatly to hear what the millionaire had to say, but there was something else that he desired more. And it was this something that drew him away into the millionare's garden, and beyond.

It was through Clara Boone that he found Cassy. It was the sculptress who had taken her in and it was she who led Jim O'Neil to Cassy's room and opened the door for him to pass inside.

"Say, Kid, I guess we didn't understand each other very well," said Jim O'Neil as he pushed back his plate that evening.

It was Saturday night and the supper was through, yet he remained at the table puffing at his pipe and sending white rivulets coursing and expanding toward the ceiling.

Cassy sniffed comfortably at a film of smoke that had ebbed over toward her.

"Say Dad," she asked, "when two people know all about each other—and haven't any secrets between them—and are good friends—and never believe the things they hear about each other, except the good things—and—well, what do you call 'em, Dad?"

"Pals," Jim O'Neil replied promptly. "There's only one word to describe them, and that's 'pals'!" And then he leaned over the table and spoke into Cassy's eyes. "Say, Kid, that's what we two will be—pals."

The Trap of Circumstance

BY E. ROBERT STEVENSON

Fearing that he is losing his reason, a man forces a burglar who has broken into his house to be a party to his death to escape the family shame of a suicide's death.

A THICK night fog soaked into the town, so heavy that fences, porch floors, flagstone walks and other exposed things sopped in all the moisture they could bear and then reeked in its clammy dampness. From the foliage of trees and bushes and the eaves of houses, where the watery mist had thickened into drops, every now and then it dripped heavily.

In the shadow of a great elm, before a residence that set back among the dreary shadows of such chill dripping trees, stood a man—waiting. As though the fog and night darkness did not offer enough concealment, he hugged close to the tree trunk, embracing to the full the shadows that absorbed the outlines of his sturdy form.

For over two hours he had been lurking thus about the house, clinging to the shadows of a tree for a while on one side and then on another. Now and again, as a shiver shook him, he would let slip an oath, in a disgusted mutter repeating, "God! It's a rotten night!"

From a steeple afar, came the strokes of the midnight hour. Another shiver quivered through him.

"I ain't going to wait here much longer," he gave expression to his thought and, bending, picked up a small black leather bag that had been resting at his feet.

Again he shivered.

"Here goes," he muttered, as if giving himself the command for action. Before leaving the sheltering shadow, however, he paused for a moment to look carefully about him on all sides. Then, as one who would take the place by determined, rapid assault, he turned his steps directly across the lawn to the side of the house. Over the iron railing of a first floor balcony he climbed and dropped his bag on the flooring. Evidently his every action had been carefully planned during those hours of vigil.

Again, for a moment, he turned toward the street, stood still and listened. Then, satisfied that no one was there, he deftly opened the leather bag and took from it a softened mass of putty. He warmed and worked this for a moment in his hands. His nimble fingers then laid it in a soft paste over one of the small lights of glass in the French window before him.

The bag next yielded a small wooden mallet; a quick decisive blow broke the pane and he removed it. One or two small pieces of glass fell but carried with them putty that deadened their jingle.

With quick, sensitive fingers, he

reached in and shoved back the bolt that held the window frame. Gently he pushed, but it would not yield.

"Damn it!" he exclaimed softly in nervous irritation. A second bolt held it at the bottom.

Again he turned to the bag for implements of siege. As he bent, however, his attention was attracted to a second French window on the balcony. He gave a startled jump. It stood conveniently open, pulled in at least half a foot.

"Looks leery," he soliloquized in low tones. "Too damned convenient."

For a moment he stood, in the grip of indecision. Then suspicion was thrown aside. He decided that "some fool servant had forgotten to close it." Again his movements were in perfect control—determined. The bag was shoved into a corner, the window pushed wide open and he entered.

The pocket light that he flashed rapidly in two or three directions showed the dining room. It located the table, buffet, china cabinet, but they received no more than a fleeting glance. Thus flashing the lamp, he made his way into the hall, found there a wide staircase and followed its gracefully curving black walnut colonial railing up to the second floor.

Another flash showed a wide old-fashioned hall with rooms on either side. All doors were closed save one, and that received his first attention. It was an unoccupied bedroom that gave up to his rapid search nothing worth the taking.

On an instant, from somewhere across the hall, came a sharp noise as though someone had dropped something. The intruder's sensitive ears caught the sound in a painful throb and his whole body responded with a nervous leap.

He stood motionless, intently listening. Not another sound. Five minutes of silence. With catlike tread he moved into the hall. There again he stood listening, every nerve tense. All was quiet.

Across to the closed door opposite he crept stealthily. Before it he bent, holding his ear close to the crack.

Of a sudden, without warning, the door jerked open and a flood of light from the room fell full across him. Like a wild creature suddenly startled, he leaped back, whipped from his pocket an automatic pistol and covered the doorway before waiting to discover whether it was man, woman, or child, that had thus come upon him.

"If yer move or speak, I'll shoot yer heart out," he growled.

Before him was a man of middle age with gray hair, sunken eyes and pale, haggard face. Startled, he seemed in turn, but hardly frightened. He appeared to have understood the threat, but, instead of standing still, he made a feint as though to get the weapon.

"I said stand still," came the order again in a deeper growl.

The answer was simply another clutch toward the arm that held the revolver—a clutch that was easily warded off by a quick jerk and turn of the body. Then, in what under the circumstances was a mad action, the threatened one seized the armed man's left wrist and began pulling him weakly about the hall.

Nothing could have been easier

than for the holder of the pistol to have killed his assailant, yet the weapon was not used. A moment of thus tempting Providence and the gray-haired man let go his hold and dropped back into the doorway.

"You're a poor burglar," he said calmly, a shade of irritated disappointment in his voice. "What have you got a gun for?"

"I ain't anxious to show you," was the answer, "but if you yelp a sound, I'll let you in on more than one way of using this shooter!"

As he spoke, he reversed the weapon in his hand and indicated that the offender's skull would be knocked with the butt.

"Isn't it loaded?" came the calm query.

"I may as well tell you it ain't. Maybe you'd known by this time if it was. But if you yelp a sound—" the threat began again.

"Don't worry," he was interrupted. "I'm the only one in the house. Come in."

The door was pushed open wide in invitation.

"Do you think you can soothe me into a nap?" the intruder asked suspiciously.

"Not exactly, but I can't make any more noise in here than I can out there."

Perhaps some idea that the old fellow was "off his head" and that it might be best to humor him came to the suspicious one's mind. At any rate, he stepped through the doorway.

It was a comfortable study, lined with bookcases; a desk-table at its center; but all in a state of marked disorder. A student's lamp had been thrown from the desk, its globe smashed into pieces. A waste-paper basket had been overturned, stepped upon and broken. Books and papers were scattered everywhere about the floor. A chair was overturned. At the far end of the room stood a small safe, its door open, its contents pulled out in a disorderly heap before it.

"Another crook job," flashed into the burglar's mind as his fleeting glance took in this disorder. He turned sharply to get his companion's face in the full light.

The other, reading his thoughts, shook his head and smiled in a wan and sickly manner. The character of that face impressed the inquisitor. The crook idea was instantly thrown aside.

The host pointed to a chair, but the visitor shook his head.

"I stands here," he said, leaning against the wall next the door. "I might want to make a quick getaway!"

The host sat on the edge of the desk.

"You probably think me crazy," he volunteered.

"Well, you ain't acting exactly normal," was the reply. "When a burglar threatens to shoot, the approved style for the person in the line of his gun is to follow orders. You don't appear to give a damn."

"You're right. I don't. I was about to commit suicide."

The burglar whistled, a light of understanding breaking over his face.

"Family troubles or money?"

"Worse. Insanity. My head is going off. I'm headed for an old family rut. My father and grand-

father died in insane retreats. I'm not going to."

"How are you going to do it?"

"See here."

Turning, he picked up five little pieces of wood and began fitting them together on the desk. In a moment he had framed one of those falls or traps such as youngsters use to catch field rodents.

"I place the revolver in this crotch," he explained, "and rest this stick against the trigger. These four books, laid with apparent carelessness on the desk, spring the trap. See! This one I lift, it starts the others; that one falls upon the trigger stick. I've tried a blank already, so I know how it will work. The jar of the explosion scatters the sticks, and the gun falls among the books on the desk. I drop way over here somewheres."

"That's a left-handed way of doing a job," was the suspicious comment. "Why bother with the sticks?"

"Pride and necessity. I have a sister that I care for. I don't want her to be obliged to face the world with a suicide disgrace in the family. Then, too, my insurance policy carries a suicide clause that would cut off its payment to her. It hasn't been an easy job. I've messed up the room to make it look like the marks of a struggle. I've opened the window downstairs so as to provide an explanation of how my supposed assailant got in and out. My big worry, however, has been that the sticks might not scatter just right. A little hitch might set the coroner guessing his way to the truth."

For a moment the host stopped. "Look here!" he said, struck by a new idea.

Opening a drawer, he took from it a packet of bills.

"I've a proposition to make you," he said. "There's a thousand. It's yours if you'll wait until I've shot myself and then carry off the pistol."

The burglar jumped into activity.

"Not much," he objected. "Somebody'll hear that shot, jump in and get me. Then what? There wouldn't be a jury this side of hell that could be made to believe the suicide story I'd stand ready to tell 'em. Good night!"

That final was a bromide rather than a salutation, but as he uttered it he started toward the door.

"Stand!" came the sharp command. And he stood, for the loaded pistol had been removed from the trap and was now leveled at his head.

"It's absolutely safe for you," his insistent host went on. "I've fixed a night when all my servants are away. I'm a bachelor. We two have the house entirely to ourselves."

"It's too big a risk, I tell you," the detained man protested.

"How long will they give you if I hand you over to the police?"

The expression of the man at the door showed plainly that that struck him as a nasty idea.

"Ten years, maybe," he answered. "I've been up before."

"Well, if you don't accept my proposition, I'll walk you down to the telephone and call for the police."

For a moment they stood staring at each other. The burglar decided that the man at the other side of that gun meant business.

"It's a rotten risk," he repeated.

"It's a risk of your business," was

the answer. "You've got to take the risks. You climbed into this box uninvited and now you'll get out only on my terms."

"How do you know I'll keep my word?"

"Because you'll gain nothing by breaking it. Once I've shot, you're in the trap, that is, if you are caught in this room or leaving the house; it doesn't matter much whether you have left the revolver or are carrying it away."

"Do you mean to tell me that I've got to stand here and watch you blow your brains out?"

"Why not?"

"Why not? A good big lot of why nots! I ain't setting myself up on Sunday-school morals. This ain't my first crook job. But you'd better believe I ain't so cold-blooded that I can stand and watch a job like that done without a quiver. You didn't catch me with an empty gun because I was careless. I've never carried it loaded. I'm no man killer. Let me out of here!"

Again he turned toward the door, but his host checked his departure at the pistol point.

"Move away from that door," he ordered.

The trapped man followed the direction indicated by the automatic, moving along the wall until he came to the lighted gas fixture.

"Stand there, now," came the order.

An idea flashed to the burglar and with lightning speed he followed its impulse. His fingers gripped the gas cock and turned it. Sudden darkness fell upon the room. Under its cover, he leaped for the man with the pistol. The automatic barked twice and its holder plunged forward. Their bodies met in a sudden jolt that hurled the pistol across the room.

The burglar recovered his feet. In the darkness he stood still, intently listening. Below a clock chimed one, but otherwise the house was dead still. He felt his way to the door. He gave an ear to the hall. There was no outcry; no disturbance had been made by the shots.

Down the stairs he felt his way in the darkness and on into the dining room. His fingers felt for and found the catch of the French window. He opened it.

Crash! Upon him leaped a man, followed by a second, the two bearing him to the floor under the weight of their united rush. A chair fell. A foot crashed through a window. Muffled oaths arose as the three scuffled about the carpet. Then came the clink of manacles. His wrists were locked.

"Flash your light, Bill!" one directed.

The glare of light showed blue uniforms and brass buttons.

"Get up, now."

The burglar obeyed. The third cuff of the manacles was locked to a policeman's wrist.

"We've had an eye on you over an hour laying out for this job," he was gruffly informed.

"Bring him in till we see what those shots were," directed the officer with the flash light.

Resistance was useless. He followed quietly as the way was lighted up the stairs.

At the door of the room that he had

just left they stopped while the finger of light darted about. It fell upon a gray-haired man, on his knees, clinging to the arm of a heavy leather chair. The holder of the light crossed over to him.

"Strike a light," he ordered his comrade. "This looks like a bad job."

A match glowed, touched the gas jet and once again flooded the room with light. Labored breathing came from the kneeling man. The officer put his arm about him and lifted him into the chair. A dark streak of red stained his white shirt front.

"Looks like it got him hard," the officer who was bending over him remarked. "It's too bad we waited so long. Get the gun."

The burglar's pockets were rapidly felt over and the automatic produced.

"Easy!" The discoverer had the triumphant tone of having "got the goods."

The manacled one simply stared in hopeless depression at the dying man. His captor jerked the manacles to stir him to attention.

"We've got you red-handed this trip. You may as well spit the truth," he advised. "You can't raise the face to lie about this job."

In the chair the dying man struggled. By a painful effort he pulled himself slightly forward.

"Wait!"

A hollow rattle was in his voice and for a moment he could bring no more to his lips. An ashen gray pallor overspread his face.

"I—must—tell—"

A pause fell between each word.

"Never mind, we know," the officer who was bracing his weakening body assured him in a gruff but kindly way. "He bored you," indicating the prisoner.

Weakly but emphatically the wounded man shook his head..

"What?" Incredulous surprise was in the question.

Again the head shook in denial.

The dying man's finger pointed to the burglar as he struggled once more in speech.

"He—threatened—I gripped him—we struggled—"

He stopped, for the moment unable to go on. The three listeners hung upon his every word.

"His—gun—wasn't loaded—"

The words weakened into a whisper.

"Another one—on the roof—leaned in window—shot—me twice—dropped pistol on floor there."

Spent by his great effort, the dying man fell back into the chair and closed his eyes. For a moment no one moved or spoke. Then the officer beside the chair bent his head against his chest.

"Done for," he announced curtly.

A jerk of the manacles dragged the burglar's attention away from the prostrate form.

"Who was your pal?" his captor growled in the threatening tones of the third degree. "You'd better steer us after him and give up the whole truth on this job."

The burglar recovered his calm self-assurance.

"Truth—hell," he answered. "You've found out all you're going to know about this job. The pal who helped me is where you'll never get your fingers on him."

Getting Lefty

BY WARD TRAIL

Trailed to Africa by a New York detective, a diamond thief, with the aid of Nature, foils justice.

THE tramp steamer, Adrienne, was two days out of Bremen before Mason was sure his quarry was not aboard. It was too much. Twenty weeks before he had been told tersely enough to "Get Lefty," and had been given Lefty's description.

Mason was the star detective on the New York force and he had not considered it altogether complimentary when he was sent out to pick up a diamond thief, short and stocky, with red hair, a fleck of brown in one blue eye and a purple crescent scar above the other, a deep dimple in the left cheek and plenteous freckles on both, besides being left handed. Usually he was put on cases where there was little to work upon, and he had always brought in his man. Mason had not understood—then.

And now for twenty weeks had been following this colored Sunday supplement across and up and down the continent of Europe, always close behind him, but always behind. He had been within an hour of his man two days before, when he had boarded the Adrienne. There had been almost a blazed trail to the tramp, and now, two days out, he was convinced that the man had once more eluded him. The steamer was without wireless apparatus and the first port touched would be Waco, South Africa, where freight for the diamond mines would be left. He had practically shanghaied himself, and Lefty would have just seven weeks start.

Diamond mines? Lefty never by any chance appropriated anything but diamonds—j u s t diamonds—nothing else. He had time and time again left other precious stones and gold untouched. And the trail to the steamer for South Africa had been very plain indeed.

The slow days passed and the boat glided over the oily waters of the tropics, crossed the line and plowed her way into the blue wastes beyond with never a stop to break the dull tedium. But Mason no longer desired to stop off. He had conceived an idea so far from the probabilities that he thought it might be quite possible.

At last the days of slow pacing the cramped decks came to an end and the Adrienne nosed into Waco. Mason began his careful inquiries at once, and to his vast delight, as much as to his amazement, found that his error lay simply in taking the wrong boat and not in chasing his man to that particular dock. He was told that a short stout man with red hair and freckles, a funny cock in one eye, and a curved, purple scar over the other, had come in a week

ago on a faster tramp and gone on immediately to the largest mine in the diamond fields. Quietly, therefore, Mason slipped into the dirty passenger compartment of the little jerk water line and followed. At the mine, his credentials gave him the privilege of nosing around to his heart's content. He made no more inquiries. He wanted to take this glaring white elephant without further assistance.

Having looked over the outside works, he made his way into the mine with the men. Man after man passed but not one was his man. It was possible that Lefty was with the other shift, so Mason decided to bide his time. He would debark from Waco with Lefty in his custody, or wire his resignation to his chief from Waco. And he would turn the trick by himself, too.

There was a smothered detonation. No, he would not go back now to where he had watched the men placing the fuse for a blast. Tonight, when he looked over the other shift, perhaps—

"Quick sand! quick sand! The shelf! The shelf!"

The gutteral cry was quite meaningless to Mason's ears as he made his way thoughtfully to the mouth of the mine. Hurried footsteps sounded behind him and men raced past him, wild eyes glaring in their blackened faces. Then the cry came again.

"Quick sand! Quick sand! The shelf! The shelf!"

Two burly men grasped Mason's arms and raced him with them to the last break. One of them lifted him bodily and threw him up on the wide ledge there, on which the others had already scrambled.

"Help me!" cried the man who had waited to lift the visitor.

Four men reached out eager arms and with a mighty heave brought him up with them. And then Mason saw and understood. Quick sand, released by the last blast, was flooding the mine! It had overtaken the man and though he had been pulled up in time, his boots were left sticking in the innocent-looking, wet sand, now showing in the dim light on the floor below the ledge where they crouched. Even as he looked, the boots were lost to view, though the sand hardly seemed to move.

"What's to be done?" he asked.

The man next him shrugged his shoulders.

"Wait," was the laconic reply.

The deadly sand crept up, and up and up. It passed a crack that Mason had been watching.

"Wait for what?" he suddenly shouted, shuddering in a new and deadly fear.

"For planks, if they know about it in time," vouchsafed another of the men in a stolidly indifferent tone.

Mason watched the slowly rising sand with fascinated terror. Now it passed the next jagged crack. A gray, sleek something touched his hand and vanished into the gloom. The slight, scratching sounds he had been hearing ever since the noise of the blast had subsided were explained. The rats, of course. The still sand made no sound. It only rose and rose and rose and rose. It was up to the place where the ledge rounded out now. A man pulled up his feet.

Suddenly, Mason gave a mighty yell. Then, having found his voice, continued to use it without consciousness of what he said, or seeming volition on his part. The men looked at him pityingly. One of them reached over and patted his shoulder.

"Do something! Do something!" he yelled at them.

"We're waiting. They most always know in time and send in planks," one of them assured him.

And then it happened. Quietly a broad plank nosed its way into the dim opening by the ledge. Then up to the end of that plank came the end of another like it and a man's cheerful voice sang out into the deadly gloom, "All aboard for the outside of this, my hearties!"

Something in the timbre of that voice roused Mason from the limp relief into which the appearance of the plank had cast him. It was quite unlike the voices of the men around him. It was really very like a New York Irish voice. He peered keenly at the man. And it was true! He had red hair and freckles, a dark scar above one eye and a deep dimple in one cheek. In the darkness, it was impossible to see the fleck of brown in one eye, but Mason was willing to take that for granted, since the man was short and stocky and used his left hand with more dexterity than his right in guiding the broad planks over the treacherous sand. It was Lefty.

And then Lefty looked at Mason, and Mason suddenly knew something he had merely suspected before. Lefty knew him and his mission! And now Lefty held his life, as well as the lives of the seven stolid fellows beside him, in the hollow of his hand!

"It's on the outside you'd rather be seeing me now, is it not so, just, Mr. Mason?" he asked in a mocking voice, and as he made a mocking bow to the great detective whom he had led all over the continent, his left hand made a sudden awkward movement and the plank tipped on edge. Slowly, though the stocky man clutched it with all his might, it slipped, slipped down, slowly down, down. It was gone!

One of the men swore softly in his mother tongue. Lefty backed carefully off the plank on which he was lying to the one behind it, and slowly and with infinite care, pushed the front one up to the ledge. Mason understood. Sign language makes plain reading to a detective. And with that understanding, his courage came back with a rush. He was again the calm, cool Mason, holding his life as nothing, his profession as everything—the Mason that had started on this quest.

When the plank was close enough, the men, with stolid and unanimous politeness, motioned the detective forward. This also, Mason understood. In a way, he was their guest; they would give him their best. But he could not have it so. This was his fight. Lefty did not mean to be taken and he could easily tip a plank in the darker passage through which they must creep like snakes, feeling their way, lost if a plank were lost.

"Seven men are to come ahead of me—seven—count them," he said, quietly, as Lefty slipped away. There was no reply.

"I do not know how to go. You

must go first that I may learn," he said to the men.

"But she is creeping up," they reminded him.

"Plenty of time, if you will go quickly and show me the way," he managed to say, though he felt his terror returning.

It was true, as the man had said. "She" was creeping up. "She" had not paused with the advent of help. Already the lower half of the bulge at the very edge of the ledge was covered with the simple-looking, wet sand, that did not seem to be moving, yet moved.

With consummate carefulness, one of the men crept out on the plank. Not until he gave a shout, indicating that he had reached the third plank, did the second man start. The sand had crept an inch nearer before his shout started the third man. How slow that third man seemed! The sand had risen another inch before the fourth man received his signal. Slowly, slowly it rose and rose and rose. A shout, and the fifth man crept serpent-wise onto the plank, that seemingly immovable, moved and rose, and moved and rose, with the sand on which it lay. Another inch of precious space was lost before the shout that tolled off the sixth man.

Then the seventh man tried to make Mason take his chance.

"No. You must go. This is new to me and I've lost my nerve. If your life depended on my not tipping a plank, I'd be dead sure to tip one; and if I did that, my man, I'd just slip off, and we'd both be lost, and so uselessly. No. You go and if I know I'm last, you see I won't have to bother about the plank I creep off, and that'll make it a lot easier for me."

The man protested a little, but when the shout came, he went, like the very sensible fellow that he was. And Mason was left there alone.

Slowly, slowly, the sand crept up and up. An inch was lost—an inch and a half—was the sand rising faster now or was the seventh man going more slowly? Mason could not tell. After an eternity, the shout came. The sand was rising faster! After the shout and before he could creep onto the plank another inch was lost. It was, indeed, rising very much faster. There was a scant two inches of the ledge left when he finally got himself properly spread upon the first plank and began the sinuous glide to the next. Which one would be displaced? Would Lefty start back to meet him after the seventh man emerged, and manage in that dim passage to tip one plank? He reached the third plank and something told him to shout as if there were still a man to follow. He shouted. The seventh man heard and called back encouragingly to him. He did not catch what the fellow said. It did not matter.

Where would the missing plank be? It was hard work, this crawling, and if he were not to get out, he hoped he would slip very soon into the smothering monster that was lifting him and his plank higher and higher and higher all the time, though now there was nothing by which he could mark its progress. He crept onto the sixth plank. How many there were he had no idea. He was very tired,

but he would wriggle on. Maybe somebody would prevent Lefty from tipping a plank. But who was there to know that Lefty would have any object in his death? Fool that he had been, not to tell the manager what he was there for. He would take his man alone! That old spurt of pride seemed very puerile to Mason now. Twelve planks—thirteen—fourteen. He was counting automatically. It did not matter how many there were. He had had no idea that it would be so far or take such centuries. Was life, after all, worth it? If he got out alive, Lefty would be gone. He most certainly would never sit down out there and wait for a detective to come out and take him. But, at least, if he did not get him, he would have spiked his guns for any design he might have on diamonds in the rough. There was little satisfaction in that. Sixteen—seventeen—eighteen—it was growing lighter. Was it? Or was he losing his head? Nineteen—twenty—No, it was really lighter. He was almost out. Voices came faintly to him. Would it be the next plank that was missing? No. His hand clutched it and he drew himself on. Twenty-one—twenty-two— It was very light now, and the voices were nearer, but he did not care. They had no meaning for him. He was too busy feeling for the end of the plank—that end which would not be kissing the other— Twenty-three—twenty-four—something lifted him. He was no longer creeping forward with tired, swollen hands and knees that were numbed. It was quite all right, of course. He had rather expected to go down when he came to the place of the missing plank, but it seemed he was to go up instead. That did not matter, either. He was floating easily, and ease was what he wanted.

He floated in a downy, soft darkness for ages and ages, then a gutteral voice commanded, "Here, trink dis," and something that burned was forced down his throat. He sat up. The smudged miners were swimming rather foolishly, he thought, about him. Dizzily he saw that it was a kindly Dutch doctor who held the cup to his lips. He drank again and the miners steadied themselves decorously.

"Where did my man go?" he asked weakly.

"Vot man iss dot?" the doctor wanted to know.

"A short, stocky, red-headed man, with a fleck of brown in one blue eye and a purple, crescent scar above the other, a deep dimple in one cheek and freckles on both—a left-handed man," parroted Mason, glibly.

"So? Dot's dot man, for the life, dot de manager vants just now. It iss dot he iss stole all de rough diamonts vot vos packed ready for der shibment, ninety tousant tollars vort diamonts, unt mate off mit dem on dot dramp steamer dot sailed vile ve vos vatching at der mund for der men to ged oud of dot floot. Dot dramp she carries no vireless, too, unt schtops most eferyvere from now oud."

The good doctor was in a communicative mood and would have told his patient all he knew about the great diamond robbery, but at the moment, Mason inconsiderately fainted again and gave him something else to do.

Jack in the Box

BY WILLARD E. HAWKINS

The Mystery of the Haunted Flat.

Did you ever fear being buried alive? Read the sensations—in an up to date flat.

JACK Willoughby and his wife had sensibly decided to do condensed housekeeping, until they could own their own home. They began looking for five room flats, perceived the extravagance of a spare sleeping room, and turned their search resolutely toward four room living quarters. Then the agent showed them a perfectly delightful three room apartment, and Jack snapped it up for fear their next visit would condemn him to life in one room and an annex.

It was a comfortable place. They had a pleasant living room, with a disappearing bed—one of those affairs that can be shoved out of sight under a closet during the day, so that you'd never know but what its headboard was the lower section of a real buffet. There was a tiny front porch, a kitchenette with a table arrangement, which you could fold up when you wanted to step out of the back door, a den, and a little tiled bath.

When they were alone, the Willoughby's ate from the folding table in the kitchen. If company came, they put the reading lamp on the piano and laid the cloth on the library table. And the disappearing bed made it unnecessary to invest in that article of furniture.

The agent who rented the apartment neglected to tell Willoughby that the flat was haunted. Perhaps he didn't know it. It had never entered Willoughby's head to inquire. From the earliest days there have been haunted castles and haunted houses; but whoever heard of a haunted flat?

For three months life had been going on very pleasantly with the Willoughbys. On the particular night to which this mass of predigested detail has been leading up, Willoughby retired as usual and slept his usual deep slumber. He was awakened by the doorbell, and has a faint recollection of kicking his wife out of bed to answer it.

He heard her moving around, falling over chairs and slipping into a kimona, then, having relieved his mind of responsibility, he dozed off again.

When next he woke up, the room was in pitch darkness. Turning his head from side to side, he tried to pierce the gloom to get his bearings. Willoughby's system was to look for the window over the piano on the east wall. From that he could figure out the general lay of the room, ending up with getting himself located head uppermost in bed.

To his surprise, he could not discover the window, though he turned his head from side to side. There was not even a ray of reflected light

to assist him.

Willoughby was a cool fellow, not easily disturbed. He knew that it was all right, and that when he became fully awake he would find himself twisted around staring at a blank wall or something of the sort. It wasn't until he tried to rise on one elbow that he became at all alarmed.

He was unable to move!

It was a fact. Except for a limited freedom which allowed him to turn his head from side to side, he was as utterly helpless as a stone image. He commenced to struggle frantically; but his efforts served only to make matters worse by convincing him that he was in a horrible pickle.

His first explanation was paralysis. Then he found he could wiggle his toes, cramp and uncramp his leg muscles, open and close his hands, and go through other restricted motions.

But when he attempted to rise, the weight of a hundred tons seemed to press him down. The fact was, he was lying in quarters so cramped that there was no room for his muscles to contract.

He thrust out one free hand exploringly and came into immediate proximity with the side wall of his prison. He lifted his head and his forehead struck against a hard surface with stunning violence.

Even in his panic-stricken condition, he abandoned the surmise that the ceiling had fallen. But how on earth did he get into this close box? Then it came to him.

He had awakened in his own coffin!

It is no reflection upon Willoughby's courage to say that he was terrified. Of all terrors dreaded by men, the most awful is that of being buried alive.

He gave a sharp cry of anguish, but checked it upon the instant. The horror was magnified by the reverberating din that followed his vocal demonstration. After that, no matter to what lengths his terror threatened to carry him, he was careful to make no outcry.

Was he lying buried now, or had he only recently been placed in the coffin? He thought of the brave little woman who would be left alone in the world and was filled with regret at little thoughtless acts he had allowed himself to commit toward her. Then the consideration that he might not yet be underground brought with it hope.

If he could attract attention before being loaded in the hearse and taken to the cemetery, there was a possibility that he might be saved.

Heretofore he had not been aware of any sounds outside his coffin. Now he listened intently and was rewarded. Yes, deeply muffled, but perceptible, there came to his ears the sound of a thud. His senses translated it into the banging of a door a long distance away. Evidently he had not been taken away in the hearse.

As if in answer to his thought, there came a gentle heaving of the box. It was followed by a sound—or sensation—that could not be mistaken, the vibration of wheels against the hard pavement. It was the deathknell of hope. It meant that he was in the hearse and starting for the cemetery.

Little wonder that he fainted away.

No; Willoughby was not disinterred by providential body snatchers. His experience was even stranger.

He awakened not to sit erect in his coffin, to view his grim companions in the medical dissecting room, but to find the sun streaming in on him through the window over the piano. He was lying in his own little flat, in his own little bed, and his own little wife was unconcernedly beating up muffins in the tiny kitchenette.

Dreamed it all! Perhaps. But Willoughby could not convince himself that the experience was a figment of nightmare. He felt as exhausted mentally as if he had actually gone through the nerve racking experience. Besides, the dream explanation could not account for the slight discoloration which he saw—or fancied—when he examined himself in the looking glass. The discoloration appeared at just the point of his forehead that had come in violent contact with the lid of the coffin.

Because he felt that it might frighten her, Willoughby did not mention the experience to his wife.

By the following day, he had regained his composure and except for a small lurking doubt, that refused to be entirely silenced, had accepted the only rational explanation—that it was a nightmare.

Until the latter part of the week nothing happened to bring this lurking doubt into the forefront. Willoughby was a sound sleeper, and his rest remained undisturbed until one night when he became conscious of the same vibration of wheels that had ended his former memory. Before he became fully awake, the vibration stopped abruptly.

His attempt to move met with the same uncanny result as before. The cold perspiration came out all over his body with the gruesome knowledge of his situation. But his fear of being buried alive was not, at first, as great as on the former occasion. He had a half conviction that he would wake up in the morning and find it all an unreality, just as on the former occasion.

But an even greater apprehension, the fear of the supernatural, took the place of this terror. Then it came to him suddenly that this was the same experience, the true reality. There had been no real interruption; the supposed awakening and going about his daily affairs was a dream he had gone through as he lay in his coffin.

The more he considered this, the more reasonable it seemed. He had lost consciousness when the hearse commenced to bear him toward the cemetery. He had awakened just as the vehicle drew up at its destination. After all, he was to be buried alive.

Oh, for the welcome of another dream! He closed his eyes, forcing himself to lie motionless and calm. Presently a not unpleasant stupor—perhaps due to the close atmosphere—stole over him, bringing the slumber for which he had scarcely dared to hope.

And Willoughby awoke in the morning to find things just as usual in the tiny flat. To say that he was bewildered would be putting it mildly.

"Doc," he said, later in the same day, "I—I wish you'd look me over. There's something wrong—with my mind—I believe. I have hallucina-

tions—dreadful hallucinations."

The physician regarded him gravely. "What sort of hallucinations?"

"Of—of being buried alive."

After ten minutes of thumping and questioning, the advisor wrote him out a prescription.

"Doc," said Willoughby, "are these pills for indigestion?"

"Why—er—to an extent their properties will assist your stomach in performing its work."

"Thank you," said Willoughby. When he regained the street, he tore the prescription to fragments and walked home thoughtfully. He had a plan of his own to settle all doubts of the reality of his strange experience. The device was simple. It consisted in tying a string around one of his fingers just before he went to bed.

He did not expect to make his test that night, but nevertheless the opportunity came. He woke up in pitch darkness with the same feeling of constriction as before. The tight coffin held him firmly entrapped.

He recalled the piece of string. He would settle all doubts as to the reality of his other life—the life in which he appeared to be free. With thumb and little finger he felt carefully of the middle digit.

The string, just as he had tied it, was there.

Now to prove to his daylight self that the coffin experience was likewise real.

He untied the string by a dexterous manipulation of the fingers of the same hand, then settled down with calm resignation to await the release which would come only with sleep.

The next morning, the finger that had worn the string was bare. For the first time, Jack Willoughby regarded his wife with the eye of suspicion. He did not know what he suspected her of doing, but the fact remained that she had been alone with him during the hours when his other life held sway.

"Marie," he demanded, "did anything out of the ordinary occur in our flat last night?"

"Decidedly not," she replied somewhat tartly. "The usual interruption. Mrs. Mack woke me up in order to call the doctor over our telephone. I'm sorry her husband is ill, but I do wish they'd install an instrument of their own. Three nights, almost hand running, are too many."

Jack stared in perplexity. "Did she —come night before last, too?" he inquired.

"Yes, and talked interminably about people who lived in our flat before we came. The man died, and they buried him from our front room. He was subject to trances and twice narrowly escaped being buried alive. And, she declares, the place is haunted. Superstitious old thing!"

Willoughby rose. His cheeks were blanched.

"Oh, Jack!" exclaimed his wife in alarm. "Oh, you look ghastly!"

"It's—nothing," he reassured her. "I—I don't feel well. I'll see the doctor today." He made his escape.

So this was the meaning of the terrible hallucination. Willoughby could not doubt that physic influence was at work in the room, causing any sentive person who occupied it to experience the same terrible sensations

that had possessed another amid the same surroundings.

That night, he determined, should be his last in the flat, unless the ghastly experiences ceased. His hopes on this score were rudely dispelled when he awoke to find himself again in the fancied coffin. Yet the knowledge that the thing was a chimera—a mere projection upon his own consciousness of a mind long since dead, did not make it one whit easier to bear. He had learned by experience the one sure method of release. It consisted of lying perfectly still and allowing his mind to sink into dullness.

For a fourth time he sank into slumber and awakened as usual the next morning.

"Let's move!" he exclaimed wildly at the breakfast table. "Let's not stay another day in this flat."

His wife glanced at him wonderingly. "I was almost ready to propose it myself yesterday," she said, "but last night I told Mrs. Mack that we couldn't stand it to have our rest disturbed so much nights, and she promised to have a 'phone of her own installed. So I think everything will be all right now."

"H—m, yes. Has she been telephoning again?"

"Didn't you know? And she had on the most ridiculous looking—but of course—I forgot."

"Forgot what?"

"That you couldn't see what she wore, because you were out of sight. It is convenient to have a bed that rolls under cover; I merely have to push it back into the wall so that visitors won't get a view of you in dishabille. But she stays so long that I almost wonder you don't smother. You appear to sleep calmly through it all."

Willoughby was silent for several minutes. Presently he dropped his knife and fork, then strolled unobtrusively into the front room. He bent down and peered into the cavity beneath the clothes closet, into which the bed was rolled when not in use. He eyed the top and the sides of the chamber, noted how the former sloped up near the head to allow room for pillows, and he knelt to pick up a piece of string that lay just inside the opening.

His wife heard him walk slowly toward the street door.

"You aren't going to give up this lovely flat, are you, dear?" she called.

A long pause, then: "Not if you like it," he answered, and his voice was strangely subdued.

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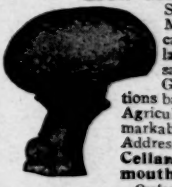

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April 1, 1915

OF

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Published Monthly at Salem, Mass.

Required by Act of Aug. 24, 1912

Name of

Editor, F. W. OSBORNE, Salem, Mass.

Business Editor, S. E. CASSINO, Salem, Mass.

Publisher, SHORTSTORY PUB. CO., Salem, Mass.

Owner:

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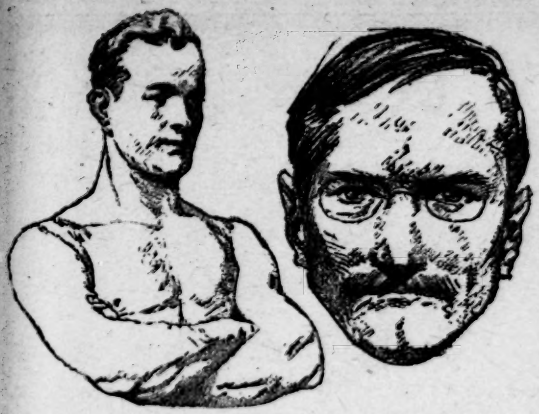

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